

Leader with Associates Cooperative Agreement

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10/01/2001 - 03/31/2002*

for

World Wildlife Fund

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Global Conservation Program Activity Report for World Wildlife Fund

Summary of Activity Status and Progress

INTRODUCTION

To pave the way in achieving WWF's global goal of conserving biodiversity in the Global 200, the ECOSNature project seeks to conserve the full extent of biodiversity in the Southwest Amazon, Atlantic Forests, Forests of the Lower Mekong, Sulu Sulawesi Seas, Terai Arc and Bering Sea ecoregions. These provide testing grounds to strengthen ecoregion conservation as an innovative approach for broad-scale conservation. This project relies on fundamental principles of learning and adaptive management which are promoted through core project management through various exchange, training and communication mechanisms.

The past six months of the ECOSNature Project resulted in steps forward for further developing actions to achieve ambitious, long-term biodiversity visions. The following provides brief highlights followed by more detailed information on results supported by USAID.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In the Bering Sea, a new marine zone was created for Nalychyev Nature Park on the east coast of Kamchatka which covers 76 square miles of marine and coastal habitat, protected seal and seabird rookeries in the western Bering Sea ecoregion.
- On October 11, 2002 the president of Paraguay officially recognized the first private reserves in the country, both of which are core priority areas for the Atlantic Forests Biodiversity Vision. (5,700-hectare Arroyo Blanco and the 50,000-hectare Estancia la Golondrina). The president also signed a decree changing the status of the 34,535-hectare Yvyturusu National Park to Yvyturusu Managed Resource Reserve.
- In the Southwest Amazon, Peru's first forest concession bidding process closed in Madre de Dios on April 22, 2002. All 25 micro-enterprises that received PPO support were awarded concessions. In Bolivia, "Altamachi" was declared a new protected area with two categories: Departmental Park(505,000 ha-) and Integrated Management Area (151,000 ha).
- In the Forests of Lower Mekong, WWF, together with the Government of Vietnam and 18 donor and international organizations, signed a Memorandum of Agreement to form a Forest Sector Support Program (FSSP) in November 2001. The FSSP will coordinate efforts to implement policies such as the Five Million-Hectare Program and the new Forest Sector Development Strategy. WWF has been chosen to represent seven international NGOs in the Technical Executive Committee.
- In the Sulu Sulawesi Seas, a multi-stakeholder patrolling system to protect the marine area of Balia Barat National Park has been in place since February 2002. And in May 2002 a Code of Conduct (COC) for the park will be officially legalized and announced.
- In the Terai Arc, 10 rhinos were successfully relocated in a highly publicized event. On a broader, scale MOUs have been signed between WWF and key donor actors for cooperation of actions at the landscape scale.

Project Management

Strategic Goals & Objectives

To conserve the full expression of biodiversity in all EcosNature ecoregions.

Collaborators/Partners

- USAID – EGAT
- GCP partners

For EAI:

- SERNAP
- Bolivia Ministry of Sustainable Development
- USAID Bolivia

Summary

Core project management plays an essential function for facilitating learning and coordinating communication across ECOSNature ecoregions, the WWF network and the broader conservation community.

Results by Objective and Activity

Objective I: Mobilize Conservation Action on an Ecoregional Scale

Result 1.1 – Effective programmatic and financial administration to advance conservation impacting ECOSNature ecoregions

With the departure of Vanessa Prada as Program Coordinator, we are pleased to have Rosa Rodriguez-Finch on the EcosNature coordination team. Rosa brings international experience and background in financial management. As a team we continue to work with WWF staff in Washington, the field and broader expertise in the WWF Network to support exploring ways of advancing conservation in the leader ecoregions as well as provide technical assistance in exploring associate agreements under the LWA to expand USAID support in Global200 ecoregions.

Result 1.2 – Facilitated activities and communication as opportunities for exchange and learning to advance ecoregion conservation implementation

Workshops

In March 2002, the AMNH Symposium on “Sustaining Seascapes: The Science and Policy of Marine Resource Management” was highly successful. This provided a forum for conservation

practitioners, students and researchers to share experiences and to appreciate the range of activities currently under-way to develop and integrate the science and policy of marine resource management. Some of the highlights are that it:

- Provided tangible examples, both domestically and internationally, of how to connect marine science with the marine policy agenda in order to maximise effectiveness and achieve sustainability:
- Gave detailed examples from around the world of the range of approaches that are succeeding at creating effective policy and management frameworks for marine conservation. Highlight the fact that there is no "one size fits all" solution, but that interventions need to match local social, economic, political and cultural contexts.
- Presented new and exciting research on scaling up the science of marine protected areas to protect ecological integrity of large regions and the development of marine protected area networks.
- Highlighted innovative interdisciplinary research on human-environment interactions in marine conservation and the development of decision-making tools for managers and policy makers.

The Conservation Strategies Unit organized a forum on "Large-Scale Conservation Planning: Stories, Experiences and Lessons Learned". Participants from WWF, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, USAID and other conservation practitioners discussed approaches, challenges, successes and lessons in planning. The meeting focused in detail on the need for more coordination among organizations; conservation targets, monitoring and evaluation; and sustainability of large-scale conservation. Recognizing the potential to achieve more biodiversity conservation through collaboration across organizations, future actions were identified. These included tackling common challenges; building on mechanisms for sharing of information, tools and plans; collaboration through the Conservation Finance Coalition (led by WCS); specific collaboration in measuring conservation progress at large scale; and coordination of conservation action in the field.

Communication

The first phase of work with Origo Inc. to improve our information and knowledge management was completed. This included an assessment of user's needs. This details content of information needs (pertaining to large scale conservation) of field practitioners, the technological preferences and challenges, and the need for a basic understanding of the knowledge culture practitioners must operate in. Three tools were identified as the most useful to meet field needs and in particular, address one of the greatest challenges of accessing timely information. These tools are a resource directory of practitioners, a document repository and a help desk feature. In phase two, CSU is working with other WWF network units to build a help desk in the coming months.

In reviewing options for broad electronic communication, work continues to adapt current use and design new options for intra/inter/extranets. Documents are now being placed on WWF International's Intranet and we are working closely with them to influence the design/infrastructure of this to be able to serve as the background for the broader 'learning portal'. From research and consultation with other conservation organizations, emphasis will be placed on building and linking existing systems (both in and outside WWF). Towards this end we are engaging with the BCIS group (e.g. where for example CI's learning portal is connected to).

Specific communication products developed in the last reporting period include:

- Sharing Across Boundaries: Issue IV: Freshwater and Ecoregion Conservation: The Burning Questions
- "Learning Across Boundaries" I & II proceedings on cd-rom
- *Conservation on a Crowded Planet*. 2001. WWF Conservation Strategies Unit. Washington, DC: WWF.
- "Large Scale Conservation - Who's doing what, where?" cd-rom of SCB poster presentation

Other selected communication products in production include:

- *Mapping the Connections: The Madagascar Overlay Maps Experience*. 2001. WWF Conservation Strategies Unit. Washington, DC: WWF. (In Press)

Result 1.3 – Facilitate innovative grants

Economic Incentives/Financial Sustainability

The Economics Support Initiative (ESI), together with the Conservation Strategies Unit, launched 3 pilot initiatives that were identified in the Asia/Pacific GREEN workshops last year. The focal areas are 1) SSME working with University of Queensland on economic tools for the management of Bunaken National Park, 2) New Guinea working with TNC, CI and local/national partners assessing land use values targeting oil palm production and 3) the freshwater ecoregions of the Forest of Lower Mekong with government, NGO's and other stakeholders to define the value of the flood as a critical ecological process.

Economic tools for the management of Bunaken National Park, Sulu-Sulawesi Sea

With the methodology for fieldwork developed, this study will be conducted during July and August. It will include 1) Systems and event mapping which will produce a model of the linked human-ecological system of the park, 2) Resilience analysis which will provide indicators of economic, ecological and social resilience and thresholds of sustainable states to further define threats to biodiversity and 3) Community valuation and evaluation which includes a local workshop to find community values (in monetary terms) for changes in non-market attributes of the park. This will produce marginal values of the park, probability of community support for different management options, and a comparison of values and probabilities between the informed and uninformed. The fieldwork will aim to determine whether and how we can create economic tools and processes in an interdisciplinary approach to help evaluate and maintain resilient human/ecological systems.

The Economics of Oil Palm compared to Alternative Options in the forests of New Guinea

As a first step in understanding the economics of oil palm compared to alternative options, staff from CSU's Economics Support Initiative convened a meeting with representatives from WWF, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, the Papua New Guinea government, academic institutions and other NGOs to review threats from oil palm expansion in PNG and identify potential actions. This meeting laid important groundwork for an overall strategy to address oil palm issues in PNG by identifying and debating critical issues/questions and securing commitment for collaborative studies to fill the most important information gaps. These studies are a comparative analyses of 1) the value of core marine and terrestrial resources to local communities, especially those affected by the environmental impacts of oil palm production; 2) the value of oil palm production to landowners, investors and government. The outcomes will be used by WWF, TNC and others to approach government, industry and local landowners on issues relating to the sustainability of oil palm development. Fieldwork is being conducted collaboratively between WWF, TNC, CI, University of PNG, Conservation Melanesia

and the Smithsonian Institute in three sites – Oro, Kimbe Bay and Madang. Fieldwork scheduled to begin in April was delayed due to national elections and will now begin in July. This study is particularly timely as the PNG government has recently signed an agreement with the ADB to finance agro-industry development.

Value of the Floods in the Mekong Basin

Flooding is an essential process on which the biodiversity of the Mekong system depends, but dams and diversions threaten it. The valuation assesses the lifestyle and livelihood values ascribed to the flood by local communities, compared with the values they associate with reduced flooding achieved through dams and diversions. To achieve this a literature review was conducted that revealed that most economic analysis has focused on the benefits of flood control. Some advanced work focused on restoring the natural functions in watersheds however the methodology is still weak and large focused on wetlands rehabilitation. This study serves to develop economic tools to better assess the value of the flood to inform future policy and planning in the face of aggressive development pressure along the Mekong.

As part of this process, a workshop was held in Phnom Penh that brought together 28 stakeholders from government, NGOs and other institutions in Laos and Cambodia. The exercise of focusing on the economic value of the natural flood regime created a forum for exchanging ideas. Participant experts assembled a list of benefits of the natural flood regime and produced a summary of available information with recommendations to guide further analyses. Based on the results, WWF is conducting a qualitative survey of perceptions of the flood in rural communities in Cambodia to complement the knowledge acquired in the workshop and literature review. Survey work is currently ongoing collecting information on: how economic activities change with levels of flood (farming, fishing, other), perceived impacts of very large and small floods, how floods affect water quality, pests, navigation, etc and identifying optimal and poor flood levels. Once completed, a value of information analysis will provide the best basis for more in-depth study of economic valuation. However, there is not enough quantitative data on the relationship between flood levels and fisheries or agriculture productivity to produce a quantitative economic value. This information can be used however to help determine where best to allocate resources towards the better understanding of the economic benefits of the natural flood regime in the Mekong. As well, it will be used for educational and campaign purposes in influencing policy development decisions.

Global Trends – Agriculture and biodiversity

A series of commodity-specific case studies are completed for 21 agricultural commodities which have had or are likely to have major environmental impacts. Information and trends over the last 40 years has been examined for bananas, beef/cattle, cacao, cashew, cassava, coffee, cotton, maize/corn, oil palm, oranges (juice), pulp (plantations), rice, rubber, salmon (aquaculture), shrimp (aquaculture), sorghum, soy, sugarcane, tea, tobacco, and wheat. Of these, oil palm, pulp plantations, shrimp aquaculture, soy, orange juice, sugarcane and beef are the most important for the priority ecoregions identified in the LWA work.

Each of the commodity chapters is WWF's first take on what is happening with markets for specific agricultural commodities and how that might affect production over time as well as on the ground impacts. The synthesis of this information will be invaluable for WWF and the conservation community to develop appropriate strategies for addressing impacts of different agriculture production systems. This information will be published to inform ecoregion staff and other practitioners to promote better understanding of the environmental issues that agriculture poses in their areas and more importantly, tangible ways on how to best address them. To

reach an even broader group of practitioners, the information will be published by Island Press (early 2003) and will help shape thinking more broadly on agriculture and the environment.

In this last reporting period, other more specific work was completed to assess the major market issues in specific LWA focal ecoregions. These results include activities at the macro level that significantly impact practices in ecoregions as well as specific work within ecoregions. At the macro commodity level this includes:

- Assessment of major investors in and buyers of product (e.g. palm oil in Sulu-Sulawesi watershed areas, soy meal and oil from Atlantic Forests and Cerrado in Brazil, and shrimp markets for products coming from aquaculture throughout the world), and
- Inventory of the main producers, impacts, market chains and buyers for five commodities that have the largest impacts on the Meso-American Reef (e.g. bananas, oil palm, orange juice, shrimp, and sugar cane).

Within specific ecoregions, results included:

- assessment of BMPs for the production of oil palm that would reduce impacts in Sabah and eastern Kalimantan that affect the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea.
- assessment of BMPs for shrimp aquaculture in collaboration with the WWF/WB/FAO/NACA consortium to identify and analyze BMPs for shrimp aquaculture over the past three years. This work was commended by 60 countries and is now moving into its second, 3-year phase. This includes insuring that information on BMPs is widely distributed and adopted, and developing a BMP-based certification program. Ecoregions where these results have already been (or will be) utilized include the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, the Atlantic Forest of NE Brazil, Lower Mekong, Madagascar, Meso-American Reef, Gulf of California, and Gulf of Fonseca.
- assessment of fertilizers and pesticides used in soy production in the cerrado and comparison to other parts of the world. These results are fed into WWF's work with the FAO's IPM facility to develop BMPs for pest management that reduce overall chemical inputs and impacts.
- assessment of BMPs for pulp plantations that reduce impacts in Sabah and Eastern Kalimantan as well as the implications of pulp mill capacity on deforestation and plantation establishment, and
- assessment of BMPs and market trends for orange juice production in the Atlantic Forest and in Belize on the Meso-American Reef.

Finally, WWF is nurturing two critical partnerships to leverage change in the investment practices of global corporate players. This includes working closely with:

- the IFC's new center for corporate responsibility to develop BMP-based investment and insurance screens to reduce the risks of those to sectors when working with agricultural producers and the development of BMP-based screens for commodity purchasers when no acceptable third party systems exist.
- EARTH University to undertake analysis, jointly, of BMPs for a number of key tropical commodities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Discussions with other GCP partners on familiar and nascent issues and questions around M&E have continued and will be brought to the table in a progressive series of meetings over the coming year. The first meeting will be held pre-SCB and will initiate discussions to outline objectives for another 2 meetings and culminating in a workshop in late winter/spring.

Preliminary discussions also identified potential collaboration with one (possibly more) GCP partners for joint testing and adapting of M&E methods at the ecoregion scale.

Engaging Stakeholders

Gender issues

In collaboration with ConGA (Conservation and Gender Alliance), this coalition of representatives have had ongoing exchange of documents including peer review of documents that were presented at a Finnish meeting of female ministers of the environment and other precursor meetings to WSSD.

WWF has supported population/gender work for several years and in order to assess the effectiveness of these activities, conducted a critical review of WWF investment in population/gender actions. Working with Foundations of Success and expert consultants, this review included a desk-top study of past activities combined with field site visits to East Africa Marine, Northern Andes and Nepal/Terai Arc. Activities under review included gender training, small grants for a variety of strategies (from family planning to environmental education) and girls scholarships. In its final draft form, the results for this review will be used as a basis for discussions at a Population/Gender Forum June 23-25, 2002. This forum builds on previous population/environment discussions that were convened over the last year and for WWF, a key objective will be to assess future direction for our investment and role population/gender and the environment activities.

Result 1.4 – WWF Bolivia assist in establishment and management of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative Foundation (EAI) in Bolivia

This activity seeks to strengthen the level and quality of conservation funding in Bolivia which includes six Global 200 ecoregions: Southwest Amazon, Pantanal, Andean Yungas, Chiquitano Dry Forest, Cerrado Woodlands, and Central Andean Puna. WWF is working with P.U.M.A. (Fundacion de Proteccion y Uso Sostenible del Medio Ambiente) to establish the EAI. The primary goal is to achieve high standards of transparency, efficiency and accountability in the establishment and management of foundation funds.

Objective II: Establishment and effective management of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative Fund (Fundacion PUMA)

This activity seeks to strengthen the level and quality of conservation funding in Bolivia which includes six Global 200 ecoregions: Southwest Amazon, Pantanal, Andean Yungas, Chiquitano Dry Forest, Cerrado Woodlands, and Central Andean Puna. WWF is working with P.U.M.A. (Fundacion de Proteccion y Uso Sostenible del Medio Ambiente) to establish the EAI. The primary goal is to achieve high standards of transparency, efficiency and accountability in the establishment and management of foundation funds.

Activity 3.1. Foundation Management

The general manager was to be hired at the end of May 2002. The Bolivian government (Ministro de Desarrollo Sostenible, Mr. Caverio) is still holding off on signing over full control of the funds in favor of Fundacion PUMA management. In February, US ambassador Rocha wrote a letter to President Quiroga urging a quick resolution of this matter and requesting he step in and remove the remaining obstacles. By April, the government replied affirmatively and

organized a meeting with various ministers and viceministers. A proposal was tabled which would require that Fundacion PUMA submit a yearly annual work plan and a budget which the government of Bolivia would approve.

This was found unacceptable by Fundacion PUMA legal counsel and a counterproposal was offered which argues that the SAFCO law (administration of public funds) does not require that the government of Bolivia oversee EAI funds.

No resolution has yet been reached and negotiations are extremely difficult at this time with national elections scheduled for June 30th, 2002.

Activity 3.2 Support for Institutional Continuity

In the meantime, WWF assistance and funding to PUMA went to:

- Payment of Fundacion PUMA dues with RedLac.
- Board meetings
- Public pressure

At the request of the Fundacion PUMA board, WWF used its communications staff to release a press statement criticizing the government for inaction with regards to PUMA. The main point was to criticize the immobilization of much needed funds for natural resource management and conservation. The articles, which were printed in various papers in La Paz and Santa Cruz, did cause a stir with local ngos, which expect to be recipients of PUMA grants, and also moved Minister Caverio to call WWF to discuss his position.

Table of Progress

| <u>Benchmark Number</u> | <u>Benchmark/Output</u> | <u>Status*</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1.1 | Effective programmatic and financial administration to advance conservation impact in ECOSNature ecoregions | On-track |
| 1.2 | Facilitate activities and communication as opportunities for exchange and learning to advance Ecoregion Conservation implementation | On-track |
| 1.3 | Facilitate innovative grants | On-track |
| 1.4 | Strategic technical advice provided in the establishment and development of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative Foundation (EAI) in Bolivia to support Ecoregion Conservation in six Global 200 ecoregions. | Mixed Performance |
| 1.4 | Legal documents completed and now in the process of being legalized. | Completed |
| 1.4 | Operational manuals completed and approved by Technical Working Group. The manuals have defined the process of Board selection, which has been initiated. | Completed |
| 1.4 | Communications strategy developed | Planned for 2002 |
| | Provisional Board formed and in the process of selecting the new Board | Completed |
| 1.4 | Board structure and responsibilities established. | On-Track |

Status may include activities that are completed, on-track, delayed, mixed performance, or cancelled.

Next Steps

Continue to apply high level pressure for the resolution, because at this point there are no more technical points to be solved, it is a question of interpretation of how PUMA would work better: under a fully private board, or under a private board with public oversight on the use of funds.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

If pressure from the US embassy has no effect at this point, it will be necessary to wait until the next government is put in place.

Bering Sea Ecoregion

Strategic Goals & Objectives

The objective of the Bering Sea program is to conserve the globally significant biodiversity of the Bering Sea by protecting key sites and wildlife populations, as well as shaping development policies for improved stewardship in collaboration with local communities, the private sector and US and Russian governments

Collaborators/Partners

Administration of Chukotka government
Alaska Marine Conservation Council
Alaska Oceans Network
Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association
Association of Marine Mammal Hunters
Audubon Society of Alaska
Beringia Ethnic-Nature Park
Children's Library of Anadyr
Kaira Club
Kamchatka Fisheries Management Agency
Kamchatka Region Parks Administration
League of Independent Experts
North Slope Burrough
Pacific Environment
Pribilof Islands Stewardship Council
Russian Academy of Science
Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
Russia Program Office
The Nature Conservancy of Alaska
TRAFFIC - Europe
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Wild Salmon Center
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
Yupik Association

Summary

Highlights

In this period the main highlights are two-fold. First, we can finally report on the creation of a new marine zone for Nalychevo Nature Park on the east coast of Kamchatka. The area will cover 76 square miles of marine and coastal habitat, protected seal and seabird rookeries in the western Bering Sea ecoregion.

The second highlight is the close relationship WWF-Russia has been building with the administration of the Chukotka Autonomous Region's government. Through regular contact and cooperation on several projects in Moscow and Anadyr, WWF has made inroads in gaining support for the growing Living Planet Clubs educational program, and has shown itself to be a solid partner in the educational sector. Now we will try to use this position to gain entry into other issues such as monitoring oil development on the Bering Sea coast.

Additionally, as part of our efforts to support conservation work in the region, we have attracted new private donors to the western Bering Sea. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation has recently awarded a 2-year grant to WWF for our work in the ecoregion. The Oak Foundation, based in Switzerland, also recently approved a grant proposal for work in habitat protection and fisheries reform on both sides of the Bering Sea. The USAID funding has allowed us to leverage new support, thereby expanding our conservation efforts in the region.

Results by Objective and Activity

Objective I: Protect key sites in the Bering Sea by establishing three new protected areas and enhancing management in two existing areas

Activity 1.1: Establishment of a Coastal Protected Area in Karaginsky District

After a major effort and long fight with the local administration in Karaginsky region, WWF has decided to pull back from this project.

Upon coming to power in 2000, the Governor of Koryakia first expressed opposition to conservation initiatives underway, specifically a salmon conservation initiative for Kamchatka that was being proposed by the United Nations Development Program. However, after some hard work in outreach and education by the conservation and scientific community, Mr. Loginov agreed not to oppose the proposal to create new four zakazniks in the region. WWF and the Wild Salmon Center supported a consultant, Vladimir Kiprianov, who prepared a proposal to create the new protected areas and gathered necessary documentation and maps. The project won the support of the local Duma of Karaginsky region, as well as the approval of the region's Fisheries Inspection Service. Unfortunately, despite these steps forward, the head of the Karaginsky District administration opposed the establishment of the new protected areas. Despite a large meeting held in the region and numerous newspaper articles on the subject, the regional leader had firmly opposed the project.

Having tried to promote the project from all possible angles, WWF Russia feels that at this time, entering an open conflict with a leader who is staunchly opposed to the new protected areas is unwise. Our strategy will be to hold on to the documents and scientific justification for the new protected areas and wait out this politically unfriendly period. Instead, we are supporting a modest educational program in the Karaginsky and Oссора regions, inviting school children's participation in our Bering Sea-wide children's art and composition contests and recognizing awardees by publishing colorful postcards and providing information about the program to local newspapers.

Activity 1.2: Establishment of Marine Zone for Nalychevo Nature Park

Update: In April 2002, officials from the Kamchatka regional government announced the creation of a new 76-square mile Marine Protected Area (MPA) adjacent to the Nalychevo Nature Park on the Kamchatka Peninsula in the Russian Far East. The new MPA stretches from the mouth of Nalycheva River to the Vakhil River - about 12 miles along the coast. The Nalychevo marine zone and the existing Nature Park contain habitat for numerous species of birds and marine mammals including brant goose, Steller's sea eagles, white-tailed eagles, five species of Pacific salmon, and rare species of char salmon.

The new marine zone was created as an agreement between the Kamchatka Parks Department and the Kamchatka Fisheries Management Agency (Kamchatrybvod). The two agencies will share responsibilities for management and enforcement, and will share the use of two ranger cabins constructed with WWF matching funds on the coast. In an atmosphere of scrutiny and pressure for conservationists, the creation of a new habitat protection zone through such an agreement offers an interesting model, one which can perhaps be replicated in other areas.

WWF distributed a press release on the announcement of the new marine zone, which was subsequently re-printed in Russian and English by a variety of on-line news bulletins, as well as the University of Washington's monthly English-language bulletin, *Marine Protected Areas*.

Activity 1.3: Beringia Ethnic Cultural Park and coastal protected areas in Chukotka Region

Update: The goal of this activity is to designate a national park on the western side of the Bering Sea. At the same time, we are attempting to monitor potential threat in the region (mentioned in the last report to USAID): coastal oil development. According to anecdotal evidence, explorative drilling has already begun on the edge of – or perhaps even inside – a coastal nature preserve. In addition to gathering information about this threat, WWF's strategy is to introduce new ideas for economic development which may offer alternative sources of income for the region. These ideas include ecotourism and marine certification.

WWF Russia has taken the following steps toward achieving the goals in this activity:

- Viktor Nikiforov provided the government of Chukotka with guidelines and suggested the regulatory measures needed to establish Beringia National Park (winter, 2001)
- Viktor Nikiforov has proposed to the administration of Chukotka candidate members for the working group that will create the National Park (winter, 2001)
- Viktor Nikiforov and Anisia Shepeleva are currently reviewing a Park Plan that was prepared nearly ten years ago, when the idea for park creation was first introduced. The plan contains detailed information on the biological, geological and floristic aspects of the region being considered for park designated. The WWF duo will propose minor changes to the text and will submit their proposed edits. This plan should then be the main planning document that will be considered in the designation process.
- To educate key officials in the Chukotka administration on the opportunities for alternatives to oil development, Viktor Nikiforov and Anisia Shepeleva (WWF Russia) invited the Deputy to the Chukotka Minister on Education and Tourism to attend an international conference on ecotourism in Sweden (May, 2002)
- To raise awareness about Chukotka as well as to build a partnership with the government of Chukotka, Viktor Nikiforov and Anisia Shepeleva created a special exhibit at a Chukotka Days holiday held in Moscow. The exhibit, which featured wildlife and people photos by

Anatoly Kochnev, Vladimir Sertun and other local photographers, was open to the public. A special brochure was created for the exhibit (Brochure attached).

- WWF Russia published articles about the Bering Sea region and our conservation program in the April issues of Aeroflot International's flight magazine, *The World of Aeroflot*, and the Anadyr newspaper, *Far North*. Copies are attached.
- Anisia Shepeleva has conducted several meetings with Alexander Borodin, a senior advisor to the Governor of Chukotka on international affairs, to discuss WWF's interest in obtaining more information about the oil development.
- The WWF Bering Sea team will make a site visit to Chukotka in late July, 2002. We will attempt to gain access to the area where drilling reportedly has begun.

Activity 1.4: Development of Kommandorsky Zapovednik Area

Update: The goal of this activity is to provide technical support to the Zapovednik and to build community ties between the zapovednik and village through an educational program.

Last fall (November), through a WWF-supported grant, a local school teacher from Nikolskoe village traveled with five young students to Petropavlovsk, where she joined the WWF-sponsored Kamchatka "Marathon 2001." The Marathon is an annual event coordinated by Lyudmila Romanova, WWF's Living Planet coordinator in Kamchatka. As participants, kids learn about Global 200 ecoregions and their importance for biodiversity, then play games or take part in contests in which they must demonstrate their knowledge of the Global 200.

The current situation in the nature reserve itself is quite problematic. Due to problems at the federal level (the Ministry of Natural Resources, to which the Zapovednik belongs, is virtually paralyzed by a new and disagreeable bureaucracy), no person has been designated as director. In fact, as recently as late May, the candidate who appeared to be the most qualified person for this challenging position, was on the verge of changing his mind about accepting the post once the offer is officially made.

As a result of this political limbo, WWF has not yet procured radios or other equipment for the reserve. However we are continually lobbying in Kamchatka and Moscow for the new director (preferably the above-mentioned candidate) to be named. According to information from one of our WWF staff members in Moscow, we have reason to hope the situation will be resolved in August, although there is no guarantee.

Objective II: Shape the development policies for improved stewardship in collaboration with local communities, the private sector and the Russian Government

Under this objective, we will concentrate particular effort in environmental education and laying the groundwork for utilizing economic incentives as a tool to improve fisheries management. Last year, under this objective, WWF supported an innovative program in fisheries enforcement with the regional fisheries management agency, Kamchatrybvod. We have not included this activity in the current implementation plan. However, WWF is committed to continuing to build upon the success of the first stage of that program. In 2001 we provided support for this, and in 2002 sought new sources of funds for this. We will provide renewed support for the satellite monitoring program as our match in efforts beginning this summer (2002)

Activity 2.1: Creation the network of the “Living Planet” Clubs in Chukotka

Update: Since last fall, a number of developments have occurred that are helping to :

1. Living Planet Club coordinators Vladimir Sertun, Lyudmila Lazutina (Chukotka) and Lyudmila Romanova and two WWF Russia staff participated in international conference “Beringia Days,” and obtain new skills, methodologies in youth education initiatives through the WWF educators’ workshop (October, 2001)
2. Following this workshop, WWF submitted a proposal to the National Park Service Beringia Conservation Program to request support for continuation of US-Russian educational exchange program. The proposal was approved this spring.
3. Also following the workshop, teachers and children from Chukotka and Kamchatka prepared educational trunks – a sort of time capsule – about their region’s nature and culture and sent it to WWF in Alaska to share with our Alaskan Living Planet Club coordinators.
4. Living Planet Club coordinators Vladimir Sertun, Lyudmila Lazutina (Chukotka) and Lyudmila Romanova took part in a WWF educational training seminar in Moscow (March 2002), attended by Living Planet Club coordinators from around the Russian north;
5. In Lavrentia, WWF identified Mikhail Zilensky, District chief, as a main contact for our new Living Planet Club there. We are still looking for a coordinator in Bilibino and must find a replacement for our Provideniya coordinator.

Perhaps most exciting of all is that within the Chukotka Autonomous Region, interest is growing within the governor’s administration in WWF’s kids’ clubs and educational program. The executive director of the Pole of Hope Foundation, the governor’s private foundation, suggested that WWF expand the nature education program throughout Chukotka. WWF Russia is working with the foundation to determine whether this “suggestion” can be supported and implemented with sufficient funds.

Activity 2.2: Laying the groundwork for certification/economic incentives for fisheries conservation

The goal of this activity is to raise awareness and build support for the concept of market incentives for sustainable fisheries management.

In December, WWF finally released the long-awaited report on illegal fisheries in the western Bering Sea. TRAFFIC report estimates that Russia is losing two to four billion dollars in illegally harvested fish, and that quotas are being overfished by 50 to 150 percent, depending on the species. WWF distributed this report widely, and the news was carried on Associated Press; Kyodo News; BBC.com; Environment News Service (Lycos); ITAR-TASS; CNN.com; Agency France Presse; Washington Post online; Maritime Business Review Magazine (UK); FAO Eurofish magazine and several other online listserves. Additionally, TRAFFIC held a press conference in Moscow at the Press Development Institute with top Russian Information Agencies and a few newspapers, a weekly magazine, 2 radiostations and a TV News crew present. (See attached press release, issued in December, 2001)

WWF also made a presentation of the report’s findings to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, in February, 2002. Assisting us in this presentation as an independent expert Vladimir Burkanov, former director of *Kamchatrybvod*.

In the area of fisheries certification, WWF Russian Far East office prepared a draft concept of responsible fishing companies and is now finalizing it. WWF's Margaret Williams and RFE marine officer Konstantin Zgurovsky attended the Pacific Rim Fisheries Conference in Vladivostok. The conference was a gathering of scientists, managers, some private industry representatives from Alaska and Russia, and a representative of the Marine Stewardship Council, Duncan Leadbitter. The WWF team discussed briefly with Mr. Leadbitter the issue of certification and how or whether it could work in Russia.

One basic task that should have been completed already is the publication in Russian of a brochure on the MSC. This will be done in the next quarter. Our new additional private funding will allow us to further investigate candidate fisheries for certification.

Table of Progress

| <u>Benchmark Number</u> | <u>Benchmark/Output</u> | <u>Status*</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Activity 1.1 | Establishment of a Coastal Protected Area in Karaginsky District | canceled |
| Activity 1.2 | Establishment of Marine Zone for Nalychevo Nature Park | complete |
| Activity 1.3 | Beringia Ethnic Cultural Park and coastal protected areas in Chukotka Region | on track |
| Activity 1.4 | Development of Kommandorsky Zapovednik Area | delayed |
| Activity 2.1 | Creation of a network of the "Living Planet" Clubs in Chukotka | on track |
| Activity 2.2 | Laying the groundwork for certification/economic incentives for fisheries conservation | delayed |

- *Status may include activities that are completed, on-track, delayed, mixed performance, or cancelled.*

Next Steps

The summer will be a time for field visits, and for investigating the oil development area on the Chukotka coasts. Additionally, WWF will be working to line up the next stage of our satellite monitoring and fisheries enforcement program in the western Bering Sea (to be funded from private funding sources). This program will be critical to the Commander Islands program, as we will attempt to integrate the enforcement program into the marine zone of the Commanders.

With our new funding we will also be looking for a new program officer to be stationed in Kamchatka. We believe this will be extremely helpful in overall coordination of our growing program in the western Bering Sea.

Success Stories

The following photos demonstrate the fame and popularity that WWF's children's calendar contest is gaining. Local government officials in Anadyr, the capital of Chukotka, have utilized several of our calendar images to adorn city buildings here.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Although USAID funds are no longer supporting our fisheries work, this is an important component of our program, and it is worth mentioning some of the challenges we face. As stated above, according to the TRAFFIC report on illegal fishing in the western Bering Sea, Russia is losing 2 to 4 billion dollars per year in illegal fishing, and quotas are being overfished by 50 to 150 percent, depending on the fishery. The problems of illegal fishing, and the issue of fisheries reform, are huge. The challenge for WWF is to make a difference on a regional scale, focusing on the Kamchatka/Commander Islands area, creating a model that can serve the rest of Russia. WWF will act as a facilitator and a catalyst, trying to push the appropriate US and Russian government agencies to improve efforts in this arena. The stakes are high, and the opposition has already resorted to violence. *(See attached newspaper article, which indicates the lengths to which the opposition will go to protest new efforts at enforcement)*. However, we must raise awareness about the problems, and support efforts inside Russia to reform enforcement efforts. We believe this satellite monitoring project is an important step in the right direction.

ATTACHMENTS:

Chukotka brochure accompanying photo exhibit
Aeroflot flight magazine
Far North newspaper
Press release: TRAFFIC report
Press release: Creation of Nalychevo Park marine zone
Newspaper article on illegal fishing and dangers to enforcement officials

Atlantic Forest Ecoregion

Strategic Goals & Objectives

The purpose of this five-year project is to make significant advances toward the long-term goal of conserving the full extent of the globally significant biodiversity of the Atlantic Forest Terrestrial Ecoregion Complex and the Upper Paraná River freshwater Ecoregion of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.

WWF's activities for the Atlantic Forest Ecoregion Complex are directed toward four long-term goals: (1) mobilizing conservation action on an Ecoregional scale; (2) protection of key sites and wildlife populations; (3) shaping regional development to support conservation; (4) and establishing the long-term conditions and capacities needed to sustain conservation. This report focuses on actions in Paraguay for the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest ecoregion (formerly referred to as the Interior Atlantic Forest ecoregion). The report also includes progress on some relevant actions in Brazil and Argentina, which are supported by matching funds.

Collaborators/Partners

- * WWF-Brazil
- * Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (FVSA)
- * USAID-Paraguay

Partners implementing activities in Paraguay through WWF sub-grants with USAID funds:

- * Fundación Moisés Bertoni
- * Alter Vida
- * Instituto de Derecho y Economía Ambiental- IDEA
- * Guyra Paraguay
- * NATURAL, Land Trust
- * Red de ONGs Ambientalistas del Paraguay

Other Selected Partners in Paraguay:

- * Fiscalía de Medio Ambiente (Ministerio Público)
- * Carrera de Ingeniería Forestal de la Universidad Nacional de Asunción
- * Secretaría de Medio Ambiente (SEAM)
- * ACORDE
- * ITAIPU-Binacional Paraguay
- * Peace Corps Environment Program - Paraguay
- * MaB (Man and the Biosphere – Paraguay chapter)
- * ECOCLUBES
- * CICOAM
- * PRONATURA
- * Pro Cosara

Summary

Highlights

On October 11, 2002 the president of Paraguay officially recognized the first private reserves in the country. Both areas are core forested areas which our Biodiversity Vision for the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest¹ prioritizes for full protection. The 5,700-hectare Arroyo Blanco Private Reserve located adjacent to the Cerro Cora National Park is one of the best protected privately owned forest reserves in Paraguay and can serve as a model for other private reserves in the Atlantic Forest. The 50,000-hectare Estancia la Golondrina (also called Morombi) property located near the Mbaracayú Biosphere Reserve contains approximately 20,000 hectares of forest protected as the Private Reserve. This official recognition exempts the landowners from property tax in exchange for their demarcation of the reserves and commitment to implement a management plan. This official recognition is the result of 7 years of efforts by partner Moises Bertoni Foundation private reserves program. We hope that this recognition and tax exemption will encourage more Paraguayan private landowners to permanently protect their Atlantic Forest fragments.

Paraguay's President signed a decree on October 9, 2002, changing the status of the 34,535-hectare Yvyturusu National Park to Yvyturusu Managed Resource Reserve. Since its declaration in 1990 the Yvyturusu National Park has been a paper park, that is existing in name only. The area had never been demarcated, the land was totally privately owned with many families living there, and there was no government administration for the park. The landowners have resisted forest conservation efforts in the park because they were concerned they would lose their land. With WWF support, the NGO Alter Vida completed demarcation of the park and recommended the change in status. With this new status the land will remain in private hands, and Alter Vida is working with the owners and the Secretary of the Environment of Paraguay to develop a management plan through a conflict resolution process. Many of the owners are now enthusiastically moving to protect their forest in private reserves or conservation easements. This is real progress in moving from protection on paper only to real protection of one of the priority core areas of remaining Atlantic Forest fragments in Paraguay.

WWF and partner actions resulted in important progress in protecting the Mbaracayú Core Forest Area. The Paraguayan government is in the process of signing a 150-year concession to the Ache Indigenous Group for conservation and sustainable use of a 4,629-hectare parcel bordering the Mbaracayú Reserve core area in the Mbaracayú Biosphere Reserve. The Ache, who maintain a traditional culture based on the forest, will maintain the forest on their land and assist in protecting the Reserve from logging. WWF and the Moises Bertoni Foundation are initiating activities to help the Ache establish themselves on the land and develop a management plan. They are also training six Ache leaders in protected area management. It is hoped that the Ache can maintain their area as a buffer zone between the Mbaracayú Reserve and surrounding agricultural lands.

Important progress is being made toward the establishment of the Rio Paraná Corridor along the border of Brazil and Paraguay. Atlantic Forest Coordinator Lucy Aquino and Paraguayan staff of ITAIPU-Binacional, (the huge hydroelectric dam on the border between Paraguay and

¹ [The name of the ecoregion was changed from Interior Atlantic Forest to Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest to more accurately reflect the local names used in all three countries \(Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil\).](#)

Brazil) established a working group to develop a proposal to Man and the Biosphere (MaB) to establish the ITAIPU reserves as a Biosphere Reserve. Lucy Aquino also met with 50 town mayors to coordinate conservation actions in the municipalities of the Departments Alto Paraná and Canindeyu.

The representatives in Paraguay of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and WWF and the USAID Paraguay Mission Environment Officer are conducting a field assessment of the conservation status of the core areas in Paraguay identified in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion Biodiversity Vision.

WWF obtained legal status in Paraguay in March 2002.

Results by Objective and Activity

Objective I: Mobilize Conservation Action on an Ecoregional Scale

Activity 1.1 WWF Ecoregional Capacity established to coordinate mobilization of conservation action for the Atlantic Forest at an ecoregional scale

Two new staff members have been hired to assist Lucy Aquino in coordinating Atlantic Forest conservation activities in Paraguay, based in a small WWF office in Asuncion. Biologist Carmen Vitale was hired in November. Carmen has experience in wildlife management and is the former Director of the Biodiversity Department of the Secretary of the Environment (SEAM). Her expertise will help to strengthen the conservation activities being developed in Paraguay, especially in strengthening the relationship among the partner government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector. Delia Raichakowsky was hired in December as secretary. Delia has a BS degree in Business Administration and has expertise in computer and basic English.

With the help of IDEA (Environmental Law Institute) WWF obtained legal status in Paraguay.

To facilitate coordinating conservation actions to achieve the Biodiversity Vision, a great deal of time is invested in cultivating partnerships among government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector. In addition to developing new grants with partners for direct implementation of activities (Develop and Implement an Integrated Curriculum for the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion, grant with Alter Vida and the Peace Corps (FC85); Establishing Legally Recognized Ecological Easements in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion, grant with NATURAL Land Trust (FC82); Training program for Ache natives in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of the Upper Jejui Watershed, grant with the Moises Bertoni Foundation - FMB (FC89); Consolidation of Priority Areas Mbaracayú And Cerro Corá in Paraguay, grant with FMB (FC91); Program to Strengthen Enforcement of Environmental Laws - Paraguay, grant with Instituto de Derecho Ambiental - IDEA (FC55); Integrated Conservation Program for Yvytyrusu Core Area, grant with Alter Vida (FC52); Identification of Priority Sites for Conservation Action in the Paraguayan Interior Atlantic Forest", grant with Guyra-Paraguay with funds from WWF-International (FC84). Lucy has also succeeded in leveraging additional government and NGO activities:

1. On an international level, Lucy Aquino participated in the "Learning Across Boundaries II" with other partners from the GCP. With representatives from WWF associate in Argentina and TNC's Paraguay director, this meeting provided an opportunity to highlight the collaborative partnership between WWF, TNC and other partners in the

Atlantic Forests. In exchange with other conservationists in different areas, several relevant issues were discussed in the meeting. These issues will contribute to the strategies in the Atlantic Forest Ecoregion, particularly conservation finance tools such as ecological service payments, micro-enterprise initiatives, and watershed management.

2. Within the ecoregion, regular meetings with USAID-Paraguay are helping to coordinate priority actions and to evaluate and monitor projects. The meetings are extremely important to create synergies between WWF and USAID Mission activities to improve implementation of conservation programs. In particular, these regular meetings will help partners to focus their activities using the Biodiversity Vision as a main tool for conservation of the UPAFE.
3. WWF and the Paraguayan Secretariat for the Environment are preparing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop coordinated conservation actions in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest.

Activity 1.2: A network of institutions with a shared Vision and conservation strategy for the ecoregion developed

With the help of IDEA, Moises Bertoni Foundation (FMB) is developing the statutes of the Paraguay National Commission of the Tri-National Initiative for the Interior Atlantic Forest Corridor. A draft in Spanish is available for peer review.

Efforts are advancing in Brazil to obtain official government recognition of the Tri-national Corridor. This recognition will allow Brazilian partners to apply for government financial support for activities to effectively protect the tri-national corridor.

Activity 1.3: Biodiversity Vision for the Atlantic Forest refined and monitored

Lucy Aquino continues meeting on a regular basis with staff of different organizations to promote the development of research to fill gaps in information on wildlife species.

To further refine the conservation design of priority areas, WWF engaged Guyra Paraguay to develop a second phase of the project "Priority Sites for Conservation Actions in the Upper Parana Atlantic Forest Ecoregion". The assessment was initiated and the variable "Quality of Forest" has been added to provide more rigor as a baseline that can be monitored over time.

Lucy Aquino worked with the ecoregion geographic information system (GIS) coordinator in Argentina to assure the population, land use and socio-economic data from Paraguay was collected in a format which could be combined with data from Argentina and Brazil for analysis at the ecoregion scale. Together with Guyra Paraguay and Alter Vida, a significant amount of new information was (and will continue to be) needed to include in the Biodiversity Vision document to ensure it is more reflective of the complex landscapes.

The full technical document for the Biodiversity vision will be submitted for peer review by the Ecoregion Steering Committee, internal science experts as well as external partners. While this needed peer review is in process, the Vision will continue to be used through a short summarized version that explains what the Biodiversity Vision is and to describe the different landscape units of the Vision. .

Other experts from the WWF Network and in particular WWF Brazil, met to discuss collaboration on several trans-border Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest initiatives. This included experts on policy, environmental education, ecotourism and freshwater to help coordinate actions and to channel some additional expertise to the Upper Paraná Ecoregion. In particular a manual on Ecotourism developed by WWF-Brazil will be launched in a seminar. This seminar will be announced and some partners from the ecoregion will participate.

To help sustain actions into the future for conservation driven by the vision, WWF developed selection criteria and procedures for WWF's Education for Nature (EFN) Scholarships. The team has a set of criteria, as well as a chronogram and methodology for implementing the EFN program in the Ecoregion. A committee including three University Professionals from Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay will meet in June to select 3-5 Atlantic Forest graduate scholarships for students working in the ecoregion.

Finally, the WWF UPAFE Team met to develop a five year strategic plan (July 2002-2007) toward achievement of the Biodiversity Vision across all three countries. The plan is divided in 3 general targets: 1. The "protection" of Core Areas; 2. The "restoration" of the biological corridors of native forest and 3. Implementation of sustainable use programs surrounding the core areas and the biological corridors. Priority actions were established for five years to address major threats related to each target. This planning helps to provide the structure to prioritize and coordinate actions within and across national borders.

Objective II: Protect Key Sites and Wildlife Populations

Activity 2.1: Establishing a policy framework for improved protection and management of existing protected areas

See Activity 2.2

Activity 2.2: Protect and connect core areas and priority areas identified in the landscape design of the biological vision for the Paraná/Paraíba Interior Atlantic Forest Ecoregion (now called the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion)

Activity 2.2.1: Cerro Corá Priority Area

With direct support from USAID Paraguay Mission, Guyra Paraguay is developing an analysis of land tenure in the Cerro Corá Priority Area. Guyra is also identifying ecological and administrative boundaries, and conducting a socio-economic assessment, an assessment of current and potential land use, and an analysis of threats and opportunities. Guyra has presented a preliminary report to the USAID Paraguay Mission and to partners working in the UPAFE. Guyra is sharing the information with WWF who is coordinating actions in this priority area.

Activity 2.2.2 Mbaracayú Biodiversity Corridor

Lucy Aquino mobilized communications and actions of the Moises Bertoni Foundation (FMB), the Secretary of the Environment (SEAM), the Ache Group, and the Environmental Attorney for the acquisition of 4,629 ha. of forest for an Ache Indigenous Reserve south of the Mbaracayú Reserve within the Mbaracayú Biosphere Reserve. It is hoped that the Ache can maintain this area as a buffer zone between for the Mbaracayú Reserve. The Paraguayan government will sign a 150-year concession to the Ache group for conservation and sustainable use of the forest

tract. The Ache have already moved to the area which is now called “Colony Ache Koe Tuvy” (in the Ache language this means “New Sundown”). WWF and FMB are helping with the logistics to establish the Ache in the area, develop a management plan for the area, and to train six Ache leaders to administer the land as a protected area. The Environmental Attorney is helping to control illegal logging, hunting and the invasion by landless people.

Activity 2.2.3: Rio Paraná Biodiversity Corridor

In March, USAID-Paraguay, TNC, WWF and SEAM conducted an “on the ground assessment” of the conservation status of the two core areas of the Iguazu-Misiones Biodiversity Corridor-- Kuri’y and Ñacunday -- and three core areas of the Rio Paraná Biodiversity Corridor -- Refugio Biologico Tati Yupi, Reserva Biologico Itabo and Reserva Natural Privada Itabo.

The Kuri’y core area has been almost completely deforested for soybean plantations. From the original 1000 ha of forest we calculate that approximately 25 ha. remain, totally surrounded by soybeans. While Ñacunday has a spectacular view of the waterfalls, the forest is very degraded and fragmented and the use of pesticides is very severe.

The ITAIPU (binational hydroelectric dam on the border of Brazil and Paraguay) protected areas Refugio Biologico Tati Yupi and Reserva Biological Itabo are well protected; however they need more training for park guards and more personnel to develop programs in education and sustainable agriculture with the communities in the buffer zone. In the Itabo Private Natural Reserve the group had the opportunity to visit two important initiatives that the reserve is developing: organic yerba mate (a native tea) and harvest of natural palm plantations (*Euterpes edulis*). These initiatives could serve as models for ecologically sustainable economic alternatives for the ecoregion.

Three staff members of ITAIPU-Paraguay and Lucy Aquino formed a working group to develop a proposal to the Man and the Biosphere (MaB) for the declaration of a Biosphere Reserve including the ITAIPU protected areas and a corridor along the Paraná River.

ITAIPU-Binational-Paraguay organized meetings with the mayors of 50 towns of the Paraguayan side of the Rio Paraná Biodiversity Corridor. This connection to local government leaders is very important to coordinate conservation actions in the Core Areas of the Rio Paraná Corridor. At these meetings WWF presented the Biodiversity Vision for the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest, and the mayors emphasized their lack of capacity to address the environmental threats of their area.

Activity 2.2.4: San Rafael Biodiversity Corridor

San Rafael National Park

Representatives from WWF, TNC, USAID-Paraguay and GEF met with a local NGO, Pro Cosara, on a visit to the San Rafael Core Area. The meeting was very helpful to identify priority actions to develop in the short-term. The most important threat reported by local NGO Pro Cosara was the illegal timber trade and the lack of government interest in implementing conservation programs in the region. Landowners are losing their interest in the conservation of the area, due to the lack of economic alternatives. However, the GEF representative assured the group that the government will implement several actions this year, including the acquisition from a National Bank of a parcel of land that will constitute the first administration base for the Secretary of the Environment (SEAM) in the San Rafael area. Due to the lack of funding to acquire more land, SEAM is also promoting the change of the category of the National Park (a

government-owned protected area) to Resource Management Area (private land where use is managed).

WWF with Pro Cosara, IDEA (Environmental Law Institute) and the Environmental Attorney's Office are mobilizing the enforcement of environmental laws in the San Rafael core area.

Together with GEF, WWF facilitated a meeting with partners Guyra, Natural, IDEA, TNC and the USAID Mission where each organization presented the conservation actions they are developing in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion. The objective of this meeting was to coordinate their action plans for the following year and to avoid duplication of efforts, especially in the San Rafael core area. The NGOs working in San Rafael now have a better understanding of what GEF's action plans and future programs in the ecoregion. As a result, several organizations have already organized actions with GEF in San Rafael. For example, WWF and GEF will map the remnant forest in the ecoregion in Paraguay; GEF and Alter Vida will develop a program to use the Yvytyrusu model for conflict resolution in San Rafael. WWF with other organizations will continue coordinating actions with GEF in San Rafael Area.

Yvytyrusu National Park

WWF and Alter Vida have completed the demarcation of the Yvytyrusu National Park with participation of the buffer zone community and local officials. The legal designation for the area has now been changed from *national park* to *Yvytyrusu Resource Management Area*. Alter Vida has begun a new phase of the project to develop a management plan for Yvytyrusu with the participation of the local communities. Alter Vida has now completed a rapid ecological assessment and an assessment of conflicts of the managed resource area with the local community. However, to complete a management plan, Alter Vida will collect more data on the area's socio-economic issues, including an assessment of current land-use. Based on this information Alter Vida will begin an environmental education program with the local community. Spanish copies of the reports of this activity are available.

Activity 2.3: Priorities and policy established for creation of new protected areas

The Fundación Moisés Bertoni (FMB) and NATURAL Land Trust are working to establish more Private Reserves and Conservation Easements. WWF assisted FMB with development of a GEF grant proposal to strengthen the Private Reserve program. WWF has provided a grant to Natural Land Trust to establish eight conservation easements in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest ecoregion.

In October 2001, a Presidential Decree was signed to establish the first two private reserves in Paraguay: 1. - Arroyo Blanco. – part of the Cerro Cora core area of in the Biodiversity Corridor of the same name. Approximately 5,000 ha of forest remain on the property, narrowly connected to the forested part of the Cerro Cora National Park. The forests of this area form the north-westernmost portion of the Atlantic Forest in Paraguay; and 2. - Estancia La Golondrina. - this 50,000-hectare property contains approximately 20,000 ha of forest, almost directly to the south of Mbaracayú Forest Nature Reserve, and virtually connected by a series of forest fragments between the estancia and the Mbaracayú Reserve.

See also Objective II, Activity 2.2.2

Objective III: Shape regional development to support conservation.

Activity 3.1: Reduce unsustainable logging practices; certify sustainable commercial Atlantic Forest products operations.

NATURAL Land Trust has developed a proposal to promote sustainable development of forest in Paraguay. This proposal is being discussed with the WWF forest group, and WWF and Natural will sign a grant contract in the next few weeks. With direct support from the USAID Mission in Paraguay, NATURAL Land Trust is assessing the legal status of the forestry activity in the San Rafael core area. They are developing a data base information on the illegal activities detected to assure follow up by the law enforcement authorities.

Activity 3.2: Establish a land use policy framework that supports conservation

With support from WWF and IDEA to build its capacity, the Paraguayan Environmental Prosecuting Attorney's Office (Fiscalia de Medio Ambiente) has increased its law enforcement activity in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion. The Office of the Environmental Attorney has worked in three Biodiversity Corridors of the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest: (1) San Rafael, (2) Mbaracayu and (3) Cerro Corá. During the reporting period, this unit, with the support of the Center of Judicial Investigations, has covered additional areas in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest, especially the San Rafael, Mbaracayú and Cerro Cora core areas. The Attorney General has presented to WWF a detailed report on the cases opened by the Environmental Attorney's Office. This report is available in Spanish and includes photos and maps. The results also demonstrate the urgent need for more staff (attorneys) in the ecoregion. The Environmental Attorney's Office is preparing for several hearings that will take place during this fiscal year. A forester was hired to provide technical support to their cases against illegal deforestation and timber trade. (See annexed press article).

Lucy Aquino mobilized actions of several NGOs to form a coalition to coordinate a campaign to support the work of the Environmental Attorney's Office in its fight against deforestation in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest. The group of NGOs has organized several meetings with authorities and the press and has developed support for this campaign from: the Ministry of Agriculture; the Attorney General; the American Ambassador; authorities of the AID mission in Paraguay; and the press. Civil society continues to strengthen the fight against deforestation, illegal timber trade, and corruption in the Forest Service

WWF helped the Inter-American Development Bank to develop technical recommendations to avoid negative environmental impacts of a loan for a land titling project in several departments of the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest in Paraguay. The IDB consultant developing the recommendations included the Biodiversity Vision in his report. This new contact will help to coordinate actions and avoid duplication of efforts in the ecoregion.

WWF has participated in two meetings coordinated by the Paraguayan Forestry Board (Mesa Forestal) to promote the development of a fund for a sustainable forest use program in Paraguay. More than 20 institutions, including banks, international organizations, governmental organizations and the private sector, participated in these meetings. A working group was formed to develop a draft decree to implement the Forest Law number 422; however it seems that this effort is not being widely supported, due to the absence of the Secretary of the Environment and other Environmental NGOs. WWF will analyze the objectives of this working group and continue to participate in their meetings if the process is transparent and open.

WWF also participated in a United Nations Development Program Seminar on Certification of Agriculture Products. The objective of this seminar was to study the role of certification of

“Green Products” and their importance for conservation and economy. Considering that in Paraguay the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest is the best land for agriculture, certification of Green Products presents a potential alternative for further evaluation in our strategic actions.

Objective IV: Establish long-term conditions and capacities needed to sustain conservation

Activity 4.1: Increase public awareness of the value of the Atlantic Forest

Partners NATURAL Land Trust and CICOAM have each made proposals to WWF for support for development of economic incentives: for forest certification and ecotourism respectively. The WWF Forest Group has begun discussions with NATURAL to develop the project concept. The Ecotourism Department in WWF-Brazil is discussing with CICOAM the joint development of training of communities for ecotourism.

With WWF support the Paraguay National Commission of the Tri-national Initiative for the Conservation of the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest has disseminated the forest cover map among WWF partners and other institutions in Paraguay.

With WWF support, Alter Vida and The Peace Corps are working together to develop a manual for schools on the Biodiversity and Conservation of the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion. This project includes several seminars and courses for building the capacity of teachers to disseminate information concerning their local environment - the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Ecoregion.

The Paraguayan Network of Environmental NGOs continues to work on their project “Strengthening the Network of Environmental NGOs of Paraguay” (FC53). The project completion has been delayed.

Activity 4.2: Develop joint strategies to raise and administer new funds to complement existing funding for the implementation of conservation actions identified in the Biodiversity Vision

The Nature Conservancy and WWF are forming a coalition with Paraguayan partners to develop a campaign to raise funds to acquire land for conservation in the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest ecoregion. The focus of our collaboration will be on the core areas in Paraguay identified in the Biodiversity Vision. An MOU is being developed between WWF and TNC and will be signed shortly.

Table of Progress

| <u>Benchmark Number</u> | <u>Benchmark/Output</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| I.1. | WWF ecoregional capacity established to coordinate mobilization of conservation action for the Atlantic Forest at an ecoregional scale | On-Track |
| I.2. | A network of institutions with a shared vision and conservation strategy for the ecoregion developed | Mixed performance (Delayed and on track) |

| | | |
|---------|--|---|
| I.3. | Biodiversity vision for the Atlantic Forest refined and monitored | On-Track |
| II.1. | Policy framework established for improved protection and management of existing protected areas | Mixed performance (On-Track and Completed) |
| II.2.1 | <u>Cerro Corá Biodiversity Corridor</u> Broader community actively participating with the private reserve in implementing a conservation strategy. | On-Track |
| II.2.2 | <u>Mbaracayu Biodiversity Corridor</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan developed by local partners to reduce breakdown of ecological processes and biodiversity loss in the Mbaracayu Reserve and Jejui Guasu Watershed Ache Indians involved in the management and administration of the Mbaracayu Reserve and its buffer zone | On- Track |
| II.2.3 | <u>Rio Paraná Biodiversity Corridor.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itaipú developing improved law enforcement program in Itaipú reserves Itaipú staff trained to develop environmental education and ecotourism programs at the reserves | On Track |
| II.2.4 | <u>San Rafael Biodiversity Corridor</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan developed for the Yvyrotuzu National Park with community participation | On-Track |
| II. 3 | Priorities and policy established for effective protection of new and "paper" protected areas | On-Track |
| III.1. | Unsustainable logging practices reduced | On- Track |
| III. 2. | A land use policy framework that supports conservation established | On-Track |
| IV.1. | Public awareness of the value of the Atlantic Forest increased | Mixed performance (On-Track, Completed and Delayed) |
| IV.2. | Funding mechanisms developed to provide sustained funding for Atlantic Forest Conservation | Mixed performance (On-Track and Delayed) |

- Status may include activities that are completed, on-track, delayed, mixed performance, or cancelled.

Next Steps

The WWF Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest Team has developed fiscal year 2003 – 2007 Strategic Plan. This plan includes three conservation targets:

1. Approximately 2,000,000 ha of native forest blocks (35 core areas) are protected and managed effectively (including restoration);
2. A network of biological corridors of native forests, connecting 35 core areas, are implemented (restored and/or effectively managed) thus ensuring genetic flow.

3. Approximately six million hectares of sustainable use areas, surrounding the network of core areas and biological corridors, are implemented (by means of use planning and restoration of environmental services).

The team will use this plan to develop conservation actions for the next five years based on these targets.

Success Stories

Synergy of actions has resulted in the success of projects such as:

1. Occupation of 4,629 ha. of forest by the Ache Indigenous Group, south of the Mbaracayú Reserve. The Ache are protecting the land and will receive training to become the forest rangers of the area. This result was possible because of the coordinated work among the Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM), the Moises Bertoni Foundation (FMB), General Environmental Attorney, and WWF. SEAM will acquire the land, and then they will pass it to FMB who with the help of the General Environmental Attorney Unit will protect the area. WWF will coordinate and support the strengthening of the new protected area.
2. GEF (Global Environmental Facility), SEAM, USAID, Guyra Paraguay, NATURAL Land Trust, IDEA, Pro Cosara and WWF are coordinating actions to protect the San Rafael Core Area. These organizations are promoting the acquisition of two parcels of land.
3. Demarcation, rapid ecological assessment, and conflict resolution activities for the Yvytyrusu Core Area have been completed. This result was possible because of synergistic actions of SEAM, Alter Vida, USAID and WWF.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Paraguay has several laws that protect the forest; however, the implementation of these laws and the capacity of the responsible institutions are far from being sufficient. This situation is aggravated by conflicts among institutions such as between government and NGOs and among government agencies such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Environment in the definition of their functions. Similarly conflicts arise among institutions with differing agendas and political positions that form the Network of Environmental NGOs. For example, four of the most important NGOs (IDEA, FMB, Guyra and Natural) resigned from the Network due to internal conflicts. Another important challenge is the land value of the Upper Paraná Atlantic Forest that constitutes the most important land for agriculture in Paraguay. To protect each remaining piece of land requires more resources -- more funding, more people and their time - as well as the interest and commitment of authorities and civil society. This is an urgent but long-term challenge.

Southwestern Amazon Moist Forest Ecoregion

Strategic Goals and Objectives

The objective of the Southwest Amazon Program is to conserve the full array of the biodiversity of the ecoregion by protecting key sites and wildlife populations and by shaping regional development to minimize threats to the ecoregion biodiversity. USAID support is focused on the development and consolidation of an Ecological Corridor (Amboró-Madidi) and strengthening the National Park Service (SERNAP) in Bolivia, and upgrading the status and protection of several Reserved Zones and promoting FSC Certification of Brazil nuts in Peru.

Collaborators/Partners

- * SERNAP - National Service of Protected Areas
- * CIDEDER – Centro Integrado de Defensa Ecológica y de Desarrollo).
- * BOLFOR – Bolivia Forestal
- * DGB - General Directorate for Biodiversity
- * FAN - Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza
- * CISTEL - Center of Research and Services on Teledetection
- * CETEFOR - Forestry Technical Center
- * PROCESO Educational Services
- * CI - Conservation International
- * WCS - Wildlife Conservation Society
- * Local stakeholders (Indigenous Territories –TCOs-, Municipalities and local community organization or *Organizaciones Territoriales de Base* -OTB-).
- * INRENA - The Peruvian National Protected Areas Agency
- * ACCA - “Proyecto Castañales” of the Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca Amazónica
- * FENAMAD: Federación Nativa del Rio Madre de Dios y Afluentes
- * CP-CFV: Comité Peruano de Certificación Forestal Voluntaria
- * ADAR: Asociación para el Desarrollo Amazónico Rural.

Summary

Bolivia

This project has a duration of five years (currently on its third year), and plans to deliver the following three products:

- a) Conservation plan for the Amoro-Madidi Corridor (based in a Biodiversity Vision and with activities prioritized with local stakeholders);
- b) Monitoring and Evaluation System and,

- c) Creation of the working group for the Corridor with two levels of intervention: a) coordination between conservation NGOs and, b) local institutions that will be included into the planning process.

Among the proposed goals, the following was achieved: a) CISTEL concluded the vegetation map and its report b) CETEFOR-CIDEDER concluded the proposal for the creation of the new protected area in Altamachi, c) the aforementioned proposal was duly approved by the Cochabamba Departmental Council and more recently, received the Prefectural Resolution approving the newly protected area d) the land use change (small scale) is underway and a large scale analysis is ready, e) FAN updated the database with socioeconomic and biological information and elaborated a document's summary from the original document entitle "Towards a Conservation Plan for the Amboro-Madidi Corridor" for distribution among local actors, f) CISTEL and CByG are collecting field data in six locations for 4 taxa, g) working together with WCS new biological information was collected in the central and northwestern part of the Madidi National Park.

Highlights - Bolivia

- "Altamachi" was declared a new protected area by the Departmental Government of Cochabamba, through Prefectural Resolution 132/02 on April 26, 2002 . This protected area has two categories: Departmental Park (UICN Cat. I-III –505.000 ha-) and Integrated Management Area (UICN Cat. IV-VI – 151.000 ha).
- CIDEDER, based on work undertaken for WWF, has redirected the attention of other conservation NGOs, such as Conservation International and The Nature Conservancy, aiming to seek support for the implementation of the new protected area "Altamachi".
- In coordination with WCS, consultants hired by WWF reported four new bird species for Bolivia in Madidi National Park. The new bird species for Bolivia are Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager (*Cnemoscopus rubrirostris* -ABH, IG-) Green-capped Tanager *Tangara meyerdeschauenseei* -ABH-), Subtropical Cacique (*Cacicus uropygialis* -ABH-) Silvery Tanager (*Tangara viridicollis* -ABH, IG-).
- With financial support from WWF, 30 parkguards from 11 protected areas were trained as part of SERNAP's First Training Module.

Peru:

In recent months, forest policy in Peru has been incredibly heated, with discussion and implementation of the Forest and Wildlife Law (27308) creating a critical window of opportunity for modernization of the forest sector. The WWF-Peru Programme Office has worked around the clock to lay the foundation for the rapid implementation of the Law through the country's first forest concessions in Madre de Dios and Ucayali.

In order to promote support and greater understanding, this has involved providing substantial technical assistance to small-scale timber extractors at the local level and launching a two-pronged advocacy and communications strategy, directed at both the authorities (executive and legislative branches) and the forest sector in general. We have taken on this challenge because all forest concessions, formerly subject to illegal logging, are located around such biodiversity outstanding sites as Manu National Park, Alto Purus Reserve Zone, Amarakaeri Community Reserve, Bahuaja Sonene National Park and Tambopata National Reserve. As these priority sites and large blocks of primary forests are key components of the biodiversity vision of the SWA ecoregion, we have made sure that all technical proposals assisted by WWF for the

bidding process were designed based on forest sustainability approaches, and as such it is expected that concessions will be eligible for forest certification under the FSC scheme.

In the coming months, the PPO plans to continue to fight interest groups backed by large-scale timber loggers engaging in gross political maneuvering within the Peruvian Congress, mass media manipulation, intense NGO harassment, and intimidation of small-scale loggers and grassroots leaders. These groups are attempting to maintain a monopoly on mahogany exports and continue illegal logging practices responsible for millions of hectares of habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation in protected areas and other primary forests.

Highlights - Peru

- A multi-institutional forest discussion group known as the Forest Dialogue Harmonizing Roundtable was formed in November 2001. This group, which brings together representatives of forest sector businesses and environmental organizations (including WWF-PPO) reached a consensus among various forest sector players and successfully convinced the Natural Protected Areas Agency (INRENA) and the Toledo administration to implement the Forest and Wildlife Law (27308).
- Peru's first forest concession bidding process closed in Madre de Dios on April 22, 2002. All 25 micro-enterprises that received PPO support were awarded concessions.
- The PPO helped to establish a critical alliance between FENAMAD (*Federación Nativa de Madre de Dios*) and small-scale logging associations in support of the forest concession process, and as a buffer zone strategy to protecting high biodiversity conservation protected areas and indigenous territories west of the Meridian line 343 from illegal loggers.
- The PPO, in cooperation with the Finnish Embassy, recently published an article that is a preliminary characterization of trade in handicrafts produced from endangered wildlife

Results by Objective and Activity

Objective I: Consolidation of the Amboró-Madidi Connectivity Complex

Result 1.1. Establishment and strengthening of the Connectivity Complex Amboró-Madidi Working Group.

The process for conforming the working group is at a standstill. This is due to a lack of understanding with SERNAP mainly because this government authority was not in agreement with the proposed structure for the working group and also because the CAM planning process, according to SERNAP, should fit within the national planning system. On the other hand, there is a willingness to coordinate between the three international conservation NGOs currently working in the area (TNC, CI and WWF). However, due to SERNAP's importance, ways to involve their participation are being explored but without the CAM planning process necessarily becoming governmental planning tool. With this in mind, discussions were initiated regarding the terms of reference for hiring of a coordinator for the CAM. The coordinator would be contracted by SERNAP with funds from WWF and based in SERNAP headquarters in La Paz.

The requests for local participation to determine the activities to be undertaken in the biodiversity conservation priority areas within the CAM will soon begin to take form as well as the strengthening of established capacities. This will take place once the gap analysis for the CAM has been concluded within the framework of the conservation plan and the priority areas have been selected.

Seeking to have technical tools to involve the municipalities in the strengthening of the process to establish and in the coordination of the working group, FAN prepared for WWF a summary of the document "Towards a Conservation Plan for the Bio Corridor Amboro-Madidi", with a specific description for each municipality in addition to a sequence of maps that highlight the municipality in relation to the analysis undertaken by the CAM.

With the objective of strengthening the technical capacities of parkguards, funds were awarded to Carrasco National Park in order that a park guard training course be organized and implemented. Thirty parkguards representing 11 protected areas received training. Parkguards from the following protected areas were trained: Pilon Lajas (1), Madidi (5), E.B. Beni (2), Manuripi (6), Noel Kempff (1), Carrasco (2), TIPNIS (3), San Matias (4), Kaa Iya (4), Amboró (1) and Cota Pata (1). The training was undertaken within training framework used by SERNAP consisting of four modules which allows the parkguards to obtain academic recognition at a technical level.

Result 1.2. Continuation of the Amboró-Madidi Connectivity Complex Design

The Amboró-Madidi Corridor vegetation map with approximately 115 vegetation units under 24 environmental units (landscapes units) was concluded by CISTEL (an academic center from San Simon University based in Cochabamba). The work consisted in preparing several layers of physical information like climate (based on data from 140 meteorological stations), geology, geomorphology, soils and physiography, contour lines, biological variables and 750 field verification points with type-inventories.

The vegetation map is currently in the process of being edited for future publication in a book compiling all of the reports on vegetation units. The publication will be distributed among the local actors.

CETEFOR and CIDEDER completed the local consultation regarding the proposal for the creation of the protected area. The required paperwork has also been concluded for the prefectural declaration indicating the creation of the Altamachi protected area. Altamachi represents the most important area in order to achieve connectivity between Carrasco National Park and Pilon Lajas Reserve. The area is one of the most intact cloud forests remaining in the country and thus, it is also considered as an area of high biodiversity. A very short assessment permitted the discovery of two new species of amphibians.

The Center for Biodiversity and Genetics was responsible for compiling the information on flora and fauna in three of the six areas within the CAM : Zone "Brazo Muerto", located 45 km NE from the locality of Yapacaní; Zone Diampampa (limit between the Carrasco and Amboró National Parks) located 45 km from the old road connecting Cochabamba and Santa Cruz (Siberia); Zone El Palmar, located approximately 21 km from Villa Tunari. From the different samples collected, some of them are pending identification and they will be duly classified by the end of this term. On the other hand, in coordination with WCS, consultants were hired in order to collect biological data in the center and northwestern portion of Madidi National Park. During the field collection, 4 new bird species for Bolivia were recorded: Gray-hooded Bush-

Tanager (Cnemoscopus rubrirostris -ABH, IG-) Green-capped Tanager Tangara meyerdeschauenseei -ABH-), Subtropical Cacique (Cacicus uropygialis -ABH-) Silvery Tanager (Tangara viridicollis -ABH, IG-).

Result 1.3. Continuation of the Biodiversity Monitoring and Evaluation System Design

The multi-temporal, large-scale analysis of land cover and change in use was verified in the field and the cartography was concluded. The reports and maps are being edited in order to be printed and distributed. The areas undergoing a major process of change in land use and coverage are being analyzed on a finer scale allowing for closer follow-up during the monitoring process.

FAN has updated the CAM database with the new data recorded in the field, the biological information is related with 7 taxas; 4 in flora (Orchidaceae, Bromeliaceae, Cactaceae -epiphytes only- and Passifloraceae) and 3 in fauna (birds, amphibians and mammals -Marsupialia and Rodentia).

The discussion process regarding the monitoring system will take place in conjunction with the development of the vision for biodiversity conservation for the CAM. This will occur once the level of coordination for the CAM is functioning and the local actors are organized to participate in the planning.

Objective II: Promote the creation of one protected area and its incorporation into the National System of Protected Areas of Peru (SINANPE).

Result 3.1: Creation of new protected areas within the Alto Purus Reserved Zone

In December, with PPO funding, the INRENA area Coordinator finished developing the technical dossier for the Alto Purus Reserved Zone. During this period, the PPO's other efforts to ensure the final categorization of the Reserved Zone have been put on hold due to the urgent need to implement the Forest and Wildlife Law by supporting Peru's first public bidding process for forest concessions. The PPO's advocacy work in Congress and among various stakeholders in the forest sector, along with direct financial and technical support for preparation of technical dossier for the bidding process in both Madre de Dios and Ucayali (discussed in more detail in activity 4.2), consumed a great portion of staff attention and resources. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the fundamental goal of these efforts is to protect the Alto Purus Reserved Zone from illegal loggers pushing to enter its boundaries, thus all related activities provide critical first steps to ensuring that the Alto Purus Reserved Zone receives protected area status.

Objective III: Attain Effective Management of Existing Protected Areas

Result 4.1: Updated Manu National Park's Conservation Master Plan

This semester, US-AID funds enabled WWF-PPO to finance several activities that together completed the first stage of the Manu Biosphere Reserve (MBR) Conservation Master Plan. Specifically, between November 2001 and March 2002, the PPO financed three workshops to validate the Conservation Master Plan. Participants in these workshops included migratory Andean communities within Manu National Park, indigenous communities, tourism companies, representatives of Universities from Cuzco, local authorities, and NGO's including PROMANU,

APECO, and Pronaturaleza. Further, in January 2002, PPO consultant Gustavo Hamaní completed a land-use plan and cartographic database for the MBR. PPO consultant Andrew Halliday also recently completed the Environmental Monitoring Plan, begun in January 2002, for the area. Considerable progress was also made on the validation of the Environmental Education and Communications Plan (EECAP) for the MBR, which also includes part of the Amarakaeri Reserved Zone. The validation process began in November with two main advances: 1) working meetings with the Technical Group in charge of designing the MBR Conservation Master Plan, which served to explain and spread awareness of the site-based methodology used to develop the EECAP and the ways in which the EECAP might be used to enrich the Master Plan, and 2) Environmental Education workshops for educational experts, teachers and community leaders of the Manu and Pilcopata provinces, in order to ensure that teachers internalize the need to incorporate the contents of the EECAP into their planned curriculum. Finally, the PPO financed the salaries of one area Chief and two park guards for the Reserve.

Result 4.2: Strengthened protection and control activities in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park and Tambopata National Reserve

In both the Bahuaja Sonene National Park and the Tambopata National Reserve, important advances on protection and control activities were made in recent months. In Bahuaja Sonene, the PPO financed the area Chief's two-week trip to the Putinapunko zone this April, a critical means to gauge the level of conflict among local populations in this isolated Purus region. This trip was made in response to a recent movement in Congress challenging the protected status of the area, and in light of the information gathered, the area Chief will be able to prepare a plan to resolve this situation. Also, the PPO financed the salaries of an area Chief, two biologists and one park guard for the area to ensure on-site presence, strategic planning and conservation project implementation. In Tambopata, the PPO hired consultant Kris Kirby to conduct a study consisting of standards for environmental quality to be used for ecotourism, and to determine tourism licensing fees. Considerable progress was also made in the area with regard to mining issues, which will be discussed further in 5.1.

Objective IV: Promote sustainable natural resource management in Indigenous, Extractive and Forestry Reserves and Concessions

Result 5.1: Improved forest management developed, validated and implemented with timber extractors at two strategic locations of the SWA connectivity area.

Over the past several months, progress in forest management within the SWA connectivity area has been astounding. In November of 2001, WWF became a member of the new Forest Dialogue Harmonizing Roundtable. This group, which includes business representatives of the forest sector such as CORMADERA and the National Forest Chamber, along with representatives of environmental organizations, reached a consensus among various forest sector players and successfully convinced INRENA and the Toledo administration to implement the Forest and Wildlife Law (27308). This crucial decision was reached despite objections from large-scale timber logging interests aiming to modify the law and attempting to preserve illegality and informality in the timber sector. The PPO also successfully advocated for the initiation of Peru's first public bidding process to award forest concessions, which will be sustainably managed, through numerous meetings with the Minister of Agriculture and Congressmen, timber logging businesses, NGO's, and others. Working closely with numerous small-scale timber loggers, and through a comprehensive communications strategy including paid print,

radio and television announcements and broadcasted interviews with representatives of small-scale timber logging associations, the PPO spread awareness of the benefits of the bidding process, and of the importance of sustainable management and need to modernize the forest sector. Further, the PPO provided direct technical support in the preparation of dossier, including by preparing forest management plans, for the bidding process in Madre de Dios and Ucayali. In December 2001, the PPO opened an office in Madre de Dios in order to provide increased support for the bidding process, through which it prepared technical dossier for 25 micro-enterprises. The bidding process in Madre de Dios closed on April 22, 2002 – ultimately, all 25 micro-enterprises that received PPO support were awarded concessions.

Finally, the PPO helped to establish an alliance between FENAMAD (Federación Nativa de Madre de Dios) and small-scale logging associations in support of the forest concession process, and as a buffer zone strategy to protecting high biodiversity conservation protected areas and indigenous territories west of the Meridian line 343 from illegal loggers. These areas include the Alto Purus Reserved Zone and critical upper watershed areas such as Tahuamanu, Piedras and Los Amigos. With this alliance, small-scale loggers have promised to respect the line 343 boundary, and to manage their forest concessions along this boundary sustainably, protecting the territories of indigenous piro and maschco piro groups settled in voluntary isolation from illegal loggers. As a supervision and control mechanism for the area, the PPO will participate in a multi-sectorial commission, made up of representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of the Interior, NGO's, indigenous groups, and CONAPA (Comisión Nacional de Pueblos Indígenas, Andinos y Amazónicos).

Result 5.2: Participatory Conservation Plan for the (soon to be declared) Amarakaeri Communal Reserve and build local management capacity among INRENA park guards

During this period, the Minister of Agriculture formally established the Amarakaeri Community Reserve as a new protected area of 419,000 hectares, a major advance for biodiversity conservation in Peru. In past months, the PPO provided direct financial and technical support to INRENA for the preparation of the Reserve's technical dossier. Over this report period, the PPO's contributions to the achievement of this goal have been of a more indirect nature. We have been unable to continue activities specifically aiming to assure the final categorization of the area and the development of its Conservation Master Plan due to the more pressing need to implement forest concessions through Peru's first public bidding process as discussed above. However, these actions have laid a critical foundation for the Amarakaeri area's protection. Activities in this report period were also delayed due to the postponement of the dispersal of LWA funds, which the PPO did not receive until December 2002. Finally, it should be noted that in May 2002, the PPO initiated coordination with FENEMAD and INRENA in order to implement a Management Committee for the area and to design a capacity building and training course for area park guards.

Objective V: Develop communications campaigns and support conservation policies that control and mitigate threats

Result 6.1: Standards and regulations developed for the gold mining activities in the Colorado and Malinowski Rivers (Amarakaeri Reserved Zone and Bahuaja Sonene National Park/Tambopata Reserve buffer zone)

In late 2001, the PPO initiated a project to implement specific actions to significantly mitigate the negative environmental impacts caused by gold mining in the department of Madre de Dios.

The PPO is now working directly with artisanal miners to change mining practices that create mercury pollution in aquatic and riverine systems and contribute to biodiversity loss. In March 2002, consultant Heidi Rubio Tugler began undertaking a study on microzoning of the Malinowski river basin, an influence zone in the Tambopata Reserve, and on river physical-chemical parameters, with emphasis on mercury contamination levels in fish for consumption. Also, meetings were held with artisanal mining unions, the Ministry of Energy and Mines and FENAMAD to develop a more environmentally sound mining law. These meetings, along with a workshop, began in October 2001 and have been held in INRENA Puerto Maldonado to discuss the new Small-Scale Mining Law No. 27561: "Ley de Formalización y Promoción de la Pequeña Minería y Minería Artesanal." This Law, which creates a legal framework to regulate mining activities, not only institutes mechanisms for environmentally sound practices such as management plans, environmental impact studies, and adaptation plans for environmental management; but also establishes public health guidelines and insurance rights for miners, and requires miners to use modern technology to recycle mercury.

Result 6.2 Enforcement procedures developed against wildlife trade in Madre de Dios

The PPO, in cooperation with the Finnish Embassy, recently published an article that is a preliminary characterization of trade in handicrafts produced from endangered wildlife. This article will be distributed to local authorities, NGO's, TRAFFIC, CITES and representatives of local Universities. The PPO also provided support to INRENA for the creation of a database on illegal wildlife trade, which is currently being developed and will be complete in July 2002. This database will serve as a critical first step to systematizing information on the issue.

Table of progress in meeting key activity benchmarks

| Benchmark Number | Benchmark/Output | Status* |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| 1.1 | Ecological Corridor Working Group (ECWG) organized. Roles and Responsibilities identified among the group. | On-track |
| 1.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field-based biological and ecological assessments completed to inform conservation decisions Integration of data from established monitoring systems Formation of conservation database | On-track On-track On-track |
| 1.3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological zoning and protection plan designed for the corridor, including maps of biological (species distributions, habitat and landscape characteristics, indicators) and socioeconomic (threats, focal activities) components. Evaluation of current status of biodiversity conservation (gap analysis, habitat representation, viability of protected areas). Analysis of existing management plans and control of protected areas. Design Biodiversity Monitoring and Evaluation System | On-track Delayed On-track On-track |
| 1.4 | Analysis performed to develop Conservation Plan | Delayed |

| | | |
|-----|---|--|
| | and implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation System | |
| 1.5 | Steps made toward developing plan for community-based monitoring of threats and indicators (communities informed, indicators identified, education process begun) | Delayed |
| 2.1 | Onsite presence of protection staff during this period increased. | On-track |
| 2.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park guards provided in support of the protection of Carrasco, Noel Kemp Mercado and Apolobamba National Parks. • Integration of sectoral legislation and norms in favour of protection advanced. • Co-ordination among central, departmental and local governments in support of protection improved. • System planning including monitoring and evaluation is maintained • Permanent personnel and consultants hired. | On-track On-track On-track On-track On-track |
| 3.1 | Creation of the Alto Purus and Manu Reserved Zones and the incorporation of these areas into the National System of Protected Areas (SINANPE). Creation of Amarakaeri Communal Reserve. | On track Ready |
| 4.1 | 30,000 hectares of Brazil nut certified in year one according to Forest Stewardship council principles and guidelines. | Delayed |

Next Steps

During the next six months we hope to publish and distribute de vegetation map and its accompanying report. The results of multi-temporal cover and land use change for large and small scale (more detailed analysis of four zones) will be concluded and published.

We also plan to support CIDEDER and the Prefecture of Cochabamba in order to obtain the supreme decree from the Bolivian Government for the Altamachi Protected Area. Once the conformation of the working group is finalized, the monitoring system will be made compatible with other existing local monitoring systems in the CAM and we hope to have completed the collection of biological data for the taxa selected by FAN. With all of the above mentioned we feel that we will be ready at the end of this next fiscal year (FY02) to identify and prioritize areas for biodiversity conservation and prioritize conservation actions for every prioritized area.

Success Stories

The recently created Altamachi Protected Area is an example of how an ecoregional analysis can lead to a local prioritization. The Altamachi Protected Area was the result of a series of studies, on various scales, beginning with a study carried out by FAN for WWF entitled

“Ecoregion-Based Conservation in the Southwest Amazon (SWA) – Bolivian Portion” in which 4 important corridors for the SWA were identified. The Amboro-Madidi Corridor was the most important one due to its high levels of biodiversity and endemism as well as the fragility of its ecosystem. A second study also undertaken by FAN entitled “Towards a Conservation Plan for the Amboro-Madidi Corridor”, demonstrated a connectivity and representivity gap in the area of Covendo-Altamachi-Cotacajes. At the same time that one of the areas most lacking biological and socioeconomic information was also identified. This lack of information led to research efforts to uncover biological and socioeconomic data – this was carried out by CETEFOR-CIDEDER. As a result of their investigations the initiative was born to create the Altamachi Protected Area. Later, this proposed new area was approved by the departmental authorities in Cochabamba. During the process in preparing the proposal and the creation of the protected area, several public consultations took place at the local level (in the communities and in the city itself). This protected area actually consists of two categories – departmental park (UICN Cat. I-III – 505.000 ha-) and Integrated Natural Management Area (UICN Cat. IV-VI – 151.000 ha). This last category includes 14 communities that were in agreement with the creation of the protected area. Now, the only pending action is the ratification on behalf of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Planning so that a Supreme Decree can be awarded.

Forests of the Lower Mekong

Strategic Goals & Objectives

The Forests of the Lower Mekong (FLM) is an ecoregional complex, which contains the Greater Annamites and the Dry Forests of the Lower Mekong Basin Ecoregions: two of WWF's Global 200 most endangered spaces. The FLM comprises an incredibly high diversity of habitats including deciduous dipterocarp forests, moist evergreen forests, karst limestone forests, open grasslands and savannas, upland plateaus, wetlands, and pristine riparian environments. Habitats in the FLM support diverse, abundant, and rare wildlife and are highly interrelated ecologically. Covering much of the region referred to as Indochina, these ecoregions have been strongly connected both politically and socially.

The goal of the ecoregion program for the Forests of the Lower Mekong is: to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and maintain the integrity of biological processes across the Forests of the Lower Mekong.

The objectives for the program are to:

- Mobilize conservation on an ecoregional scale
- Promote integrated conservation and development in priority landscapes of the Forests of the Lower Mekong
- Promote a supportive policy environment for conservation and sustainable natural resource management
- Lay the foundation for lasting conservation
- Promote the conservation of the marine biodiversity of Con Dao National Park

Collaborators/Partners

Greater Annamites Ecoregion

- Government of Vietnam:
 - *Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development* (Forest Protection Department; International Cooperation Department; Department for Forestry Development; Forest Inventory and Planning Institute); (central and provisional levels)
 - *National Centre for Natural Sciences and Technology*: Institute for Ecological and Biological Resources
 - *Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment* (National Environment Agency)
 - Representatives of Provincial level People's Committees.
 - Central Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas (CEMMA)
 - National University of Vietnam; Xuan Mai Forestry College
- Government of Lao PDR:
 - Department of Forestry and other relevant government Ministries and Departments

- International NGOs:
 - TRAFFIC Indochina Program (SE Asia); IUCN; Birdlife International; CARE International; SNV; Wildlife Conservation Society
 - American Museum of Natural History
- United Nation Development Program (UNDP)

Dry Forests of Central Indochina Ecoregion

- Royal Government of Cambodia:
 - *Ministry of Environment and Provincial Environment Departments*; Department of Conservation and Nature Development
 - *Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries*; Department of Forestry and Wildlife
- International NGOs
Wildlife Conservation Society; Flora and Fauna International; TRAFFIC Indochina Program (SE Asia); International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Oxfam US

Summary

WWF has successfully realigned existing conservation activities in the **Greater Annamites** ecoregion toward immediate priorities and established support for large-scale strategic conservation among decision-makers. In place of a series of unrelated site projects, which neither individually nor collectively guaranteed the future of the Annamites' forests and wildlife, WWF has established a strategic process and partnership structure to identify and implement the necessary action to preserve biodiversity for future generations. WWF is working to transfer capacity to Vietnamese and Laotians to carry out a conservation strategy based on careful biological and social research—a plan to combat the key threats to the region of agricultural expansion, illegal hunting, collection of forest products, and unregulated development. We have intervened to prevent destruction of habitat and threats to endangered species in sites of the highest priority within the ecoregion.

In the **Central Indochina Dry Forests** ecoregion, conservation activities of any kind, site-based or large-scale, were next to nonexistent before the ecoregion program was launched in 2001. Here the threats of rampant wildlife trade and illegal logging are compounded by a stark lack of information on the conservation status of the region and of local capacity to conduct conservation activities. WWF, therefore, has not only been working to fill information and capacity gaps in the region but has also used the Forests of the Lower Mekong Biovision to mobilize greater local, national and international involvement in conserving the Dry Forests. At least three International NGOs, three local NGOs and two government partners are now conducting conservation activities throughout the Dry Forests, including three GEFs in the pipeline and a million dollar International Tropical Timber Organization project.

The **Central Annamites** and **Eastern Plains** landscapes are the two cornerstones of the ecoregion program. Through these two initiatives WWF has successfully piloted new partnerships across sectors and strategic planning processes across provincial and national boundaries. Through these partnerships and planning processes, we are targeting underlying issues such as wildlife trade and government strategies that affect conservation at multiple sites and threaten achievement of long-term conservation goals.

Highlights❖ **Forest Sector Support Program (FSSP) established**

WWF, together with the Government of Vietnam and 18 donor and international organizations, signed a Memorandum of Agreement to form a Forest Sector Support Program (FSSP) in November 2001. The FSSP will coordinate efforts to implement policies such as the Five Million-Hectare Program and the new Forest Sector Development Strategy. (see below) WWF has been chosen to represent seven international NGOs in the Technical Executive Committee.

❖ **Vietnam Approves Forest Development Strategy**

The recently approved Forest Sector Development Strategy 2001 – 2010 of Vietnam contains a new priority program on sustainable forest management. This is the result of more than three years support to sustainable forest management and the National Working Group in Vietnam. The Strategy will be implemented through the FSSP.

❖ **Ford Foundation Supports Sustainable Forest Management in Vietnam**

The National Working Group (NWG) on Sustainable Forest Management, with technical assistance from WWF, received a grant of 40,000 USD from the Ford Foundation to gain endorsement by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and to accept the National Standards as Vietnam FSC standards.

❖ **New Sites of Global Conservation Value Discovered in the Eastern Plains**

A biological survey south of Phnom Phrich sanctuary discovered a group of small lakes, which were found to support key bird species such as the Giant Ibis, a remarkable bird previously thought to be restricted to very small populations in sites only in the Northern Plains landscape.

❖ **Central Annamites Landscape Model Attracts the European Union**

The European Union proposes to expand an existing integrated conservation and development project (ICDP) based on a single protected area, to include the entire Northern Annamites landscape based on the Central Annamites' model. The EU, which has provided over 20 Million Ecus to the initial ICDP, is looking at increasing its investment by 150% in order to undertake a full landscape-scale Initiative.

❖ **Song Thanh Nature Reserve (STNR)**

STNR, a key protected area in the Central Annamites is now fully operational. Through startup funds from WWF, the reserve was outfitted with essential equipment such as motorbikes, telecommunications and electricity supplies for two existing guard stations.

In a rare move, Quang Nam province showed their firm commitment to conservation by providing funding to Song Thanh Nature Reserve for a reserve headquarters. This scale of conservation investment from a Provincial budgets usually only happens with pressure from central government.

The first cast of a tiger print in Song Thanh Nature Reserve, a designated Tiger Conservation Unit, was obtained through community/park cooperation. Following WWF trainings in participatory biodiversity conservation for Song Thanh forest rangers and community members, a local person alerted the rangers of a possible tiger print within 50 meters of the Reserve headquarters. With their new skills, the rangers were then able to confirm and document the print, increasing the Reserve's accuracy in monitoring tiger populations.

Results by Objective and Activity

Objective I: Mobilize conservation on an ecoregional scale

Result 1.1: Strengthen Ecoregion Program Management Capacity

New Staff

Two new members of staff, Seng Teak and Le Trong Trai, were recruited during this reporting period to manage the development of the Eastern Plains (Central Indochina Dry Forest Ecoregion) and the Central Annamites (Greater Annamites Ecoregion) landscape based activities respectively. Teak has been working as overall WWF-Cambodia Program Coordinator since its establishment in 1998, and more recently directed the Tiger Conservation Program in Cambodia. Trai, staff member of the Vietnamese Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, is Vietnam's leading ornithologist and has recently completed work redesigning Vietnam's protected area system.

Steering Groups

In April, the Vietnam **Greater Annamites Steering group** drafted a conservation plan for the Central Annamites landscape. In addition, the group has actively developed public interest in the Annamites conservation program through interviews for radio, television and national newspapers and public speeches at conservation meetings such as the biovision launch.

Verbal agreements have been reached with policy leaders in Lao PDR to participate in the Lao **Greater Annamites Steering group**. A joint meeting of the Vietnam and Lao steering groups is scheduled for May in order to establish a transboundary Greater Annamites steering committee.

Meetings of the **Dry Forests Coalition** members during this reporting period resulted in development of a new set of environmental education activities for the Dry Forests and four different foci for enforcement activities aimed at protecting key areas and developing different approaches to enforcement.

Result 1.2: Communicating the ecoregion program

The activities planned this year were designed to: (1) advance understanding of the new opportunities for greater long-term conservation success offered by ecoregion conservation; (2) build a better understanding of the global conservation significance of the two focal ecoregions, and; (3) prepare strategies and tactics for communicating both the threats to biodiversity and conservation achievements.

The Ecoregion on the Web

The WWF Indochina Program launched its website (www.wwfindochina.org) in March. The site includes a set of webpages on the FLM ecoregion program including a photolibrary derived from the FLM Ecoregion Information System. A full FLM ecoregion website is presently under design.

Communications Campaign for the Greater Annamites

The communications campaign for the Greater Annamites this year is aimed at creating greater awareness of the ecoregion and its global conservation significance among Vietnamese and

Lao government officials and the general public in both countries. The campaign took steps toward this aim as well as initiating activities to build awareness outside of the region.

Photostory

In November, a "photostory", which included details of both the biological significance and the threats to the Annamites, was produced for the WWF International website (www.panda.org/asiapacific/annamites.htm). The photostory has been the most frequently visited feature on the website for the past six months and has triggered a constant flow of enquiries from all corners of the world.

The Greater Annamites Ecoregion and the International Year of the Mountain (IYM)

The Food and Agriculture Organization, sponsor of the IYM, and the Vietnamese Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas have both endorsed the WWF proposal to host an "Annamites Week" in recognition of the International Year of the Mountain. The "Annamites Week", scheduled for early Fall, will include a television program, a national promotion (in partnership with a corporate sponsor) and a CD-ROM launch.

Communications Campaign for the Central Indochina Dry Forests

The communications campaign is aimed at raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity conservation in the Dry Forests ecoregion among multiple audiences. A variety of tools and approaches were used to move toward this aim.

Publications

"Towards A Vision for Biodiversity Conservation in the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex" was launched at a reception in January in Phnom Penh. The reception was well attended by representatives from Government, NGOs, and donors/embassies. The publication also received press coverage.

Two other important documents were printed and widely distributed (provided in cd-roms):

Timmins, R.J. and Ou Rattanak (2001). *The Importance of Phnom Phrich Wildlife Sanctuary and Adjacent Areas for the Conservation of Tigers and Other Key Species: A Summary*. WWF Cambodia Conservation Program, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Additionally, a complete report (rather than a summary) was distributed on a CDROM to scientists.

Maxwell, A., and Y. Pinsonneault. (2002). *Proceedings of the Conservation Strategy Workshop: Dry Forest Landscapes of Northern and Northeastern Cambodia*. WWF Cambodia Conservation Program, Phnom Penh. This included both a "hard copy" document and a CDROM that included the Power Point presentations delivered at the June 2001 workshop.

Dry Forests promotional video

Sites and activities of interest were documented, including the first video footage of Giant Ibis in the Eastern Plains. Biodiversity assessment interviews were conducted in indigenous villages. These and other materials will be incorporated into production of the promotional video.

Other communication outputs for the Dry Forests

WWF has produced a T-shirt with the panda logo on the front and a picture and slogan on the back, "Conserve the Dry Forests in Cambodia" in English and Khmer. This shirt was originally produced for a boat racing team at the annual Boat Festival in November, 2001 (the WWF-sponsored boat reached the televised final elimination round). More T-shirts will be produced for distribution to all trainees engaged in other projects under the program. Through this

distribution, the Dry Forest conservation message has become increasingly visible throughout the sparsely settled provinces of Mondulhiri and Kracheh.

Objective II: Promote integrated conservation and development in priority landscapes of the Forests of the Lower Mekong

In both the Central Annamites and the Eastern Plains landscapes, WWF is strengthening the institutional capacity of provinces to ensure better governance of natural resources and exploring, in partnership with local stakeholders, management options for areas of strategic conservation importance. In both landscapes, joint WWF/local teams have surveyed areas previously unexplored by biologists, resulting in data essential to planning, survey experience for local management authorities, and a better understanding of current threats. WWF is strategically putting in place the policy, capacity, and knowledge necessary for self-sustaining conservation.

Result 2.1: Develop and strengthen the Central Annamites Conservation Initiative, Greater Annamites Ecoregion

The Central Annamites is threatened by commercialization of agriculture, human encroachment, infrastructure development and illegal collection of timber and nontimber forest products. To combat these threats, WWF is working to influence government decision-making regarding land management and natural resource use. First, we gathered the necessary biological and socio-economic data on the landscape to determine areas of high priority for conservation and to identify opportunities to have significant impact. We then brought this information to the attention of decision-makers at the local, provincial, and national levels and facilitated creation of a common vision for conservation success in the Central Annamites, in balance with sustainable development. At the same time we created a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee to guide the Initiative and ensure broad ownership of its results.

Turning vision into action, we have been developing a conservation strategy aimed at including conservation priorities and considerations in government development planning and resource allocation decisions. Successful completion of this strategy and adoption by government authorities will be a strong step toward the reduction of threats to biodiversity in the Central Annamites and an increase in the level of sustainable development. WWF's next focus will be support for implementation of the strategy by providing training and technical assistance, and facilitating coordination and cooperation among the network of Central Annamites Initiative partners.

Strong support for the conservation strategy has already been demonstrated by Quang Nam province in Vietnam. The province has taken the rare step of allocating funds from its own budget for a new reserve headquarters in Song Thanh, located in the heart of the Central Annamites. This scale of conservation investment from a provincial budget usually only happens with pressure from the central government. The level of interest and support in Quang Nam has allowed WWF to begin implementation of conservation activities in that province, though official approval of the conservation strategy is not expected until August 2002.

Conservation Strategy Development

Le Trong Trai, the new Central Annamites Coordinator, together with the Core Group of the Annamites Steering Committee, prepared a vision and a set of goals, objectives and principles

for the Initiative in April using results of the biological and socio-economic studies. The team then began systematic provincial consultation with Central Annamites stakeholders and partners to integrate their needs and insights into the draft strategy. In the coming months, national consultations will be conducted and the final strategy and action plan will be completed by August, for official government endorsement.

- **Biodiversity Model for the Central Annamites**

The Central Annamites strategy is based in part on the findings of the biological assessment of the landscape conducted in the Fall of 2001. However, the state of nature is dynamic. In order to ensure that the conservation strategy is adaptable to new circumstances and conditions, WWF is working with the American Museum of Natural History, Columbia University, National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) and the Vietnamese Institute for Ecological and Biological Resources to develop a biodiversity model for the Central Annamites. This model will be able to accommodate new information as it becomes available and reflect any subsequent changes in the biological priorities within the landscape.

Improved Protection of Key Sites and Species

To improve protection of endangered species such as the tiger, large-antlered muntjac, and duc langur, WWF provided startup funding to Song Thanh Nature Reserve for basic equipment. In addition, the Reserve management board, rangers and key community members improved their skills in participatory conservation through a set of trainings by WWF staff. Song Thanh Nature Reserve was identified as a priority site in the Central Annamites Biovision. (see 3.1 for more detail)

Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

Two pilot sites for community forest management in the Central Annamites were identified by a joint WWF and Quang Nam Forest Protection Department team. One area of 4000 hectares in northern Quang Nam province has already been transferred from a State Forest Enterprise to community management. (see 3.1 for more detail)

WWF, as a member of the Forest Sector Support Program, continues to promote sustainable forest management through support to the National Working Group and technical assistance to provincial authorities in developing sustainable management regimes. (see 3.2 for more detail)

Result 2.2: Develop and strengthen the Conservation Initiative for The Eastern Plains, Dry Forests of Central Indochina Ecoregion

Key threats to the Eastern Plains are agricultural expansion, wildlife trade, and infrastructure development, illegal logging and collection of nontimber forest products. Key challenges to combating these threats are lack of information on the conservation status of the landscape and institutional capacity to carry out conservation action. To address these threats and overcome these challenges, the activities in the Dry Forests conservation program are focused on: strategy development, policy reform, and capacity building, particularly in the area of wildlife enforcement and community management.

Conservation Strategy Development

WWF is currently working with local Cambodian partners to develop a biological vision for the Eastern Plains. A joint team is compiling data from field surveys, both biological and social, and incorporating the data into the GIS database at WWF. This information will be used to determine areas of high conservation priority and opportunities for conservation intervention. Based on

these determinations, and using a participatory process, a common biovision for the successful conservation of the Eastern Plains will be completed during the rainy season of 2002 (July-August). In turn, the biovision will be used as the basis for developing a conservation strategy.

WWF conducted a field sampling survey in Phnom Phrich Wildlife Sanctuary in March 2002 in order to fill information gaps on the conservation status of the Eastern Plains. This information will further enhance the quality of the biovision and conservation strategy. The survey team groundtruthed basic data from existing topographical maps concerning water sources, in this case during the peak of the dry season. The team found some alarming information regarding threats to biodiversity in the landscape. The primary findings can be summarized as follows:

A. Several streams mapped as permanent were completely dry in late March 2002. This dry season of 2002 is exceptionally dry, as reflected in the problems with forests fires in central and southern Vietnam.

B. Evidence for the elephant herd that occurred at the O Rpah site last year was not found this year. Local reports from resin collectors indicated that a herd of similar or larger size was located this year, at this time, at the northern end of an area of dense forest, about 20 km southeast of O Rpah.

C. Although national and topographic maps show almost no settlements in the northwestern section of PPWS, there is considerable traffic through the area, via oxcart, motorbike and jeep, for hunting and fishing. The main origin points for these expeditions are the village sites of Srae Chih (on O Krieng, NW of the WS) and Antrong, a previously undocumented village inside the western boundary of the WS. Wildlife sign density in the areas frequented by these villagers is noticeably lower than that found in areas to the east.

D. Antrong is also the site of another gold mine, previously unknown to conservation staff in Phnom Penh. This discovery, along with another described by our guides, brings the number of gold mines inside Phnom Phrich to four: Prey Meas, Antrong, Rohav, and O Ndraik. O Ndraik only operates during the rainy season.

Conservation Action

Controlling the Trade in Wildlife

Wildlife trade is one of the greatest threats to endangered species in Asia. In the latter part of January, WWF committed to develop a landscape-scale strategy for wildlife law enforcement in partnership with TRAFFIC-South East Asia. The strategy will include negotiating with relevant government agencies for an approved 5-year Action Plan reflecting that strategy. The project will start in April 2002 with a rapid survey to determine the level of key species wildlife trade along the critical eastern section of Cambodia's international border, from Svay Rieng to Stung Treng provinces. This information will be used to develop a draft strategy for improved enforcement within the Eastern Plains Landscape of the Indochina Dry Forest Ecoregion by August. The strategy will then be finalized by early Fall in meetings among officials of relevant conservation and law enforcement agencies, to gain their approval. The approved plan will be used in conservation project planning for the following (2002-2003) dry season.

Improved Protection of Key Sites and Species

Lomphat and Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuaries are both located within the Eastern Plains and together comprise 472,000 hectares within the landscape. These two sanctuaries, however, have little to no capacity to enforce their protected status. In response, WWF gave fifteen Phnom Prich rangers basic Protected Area training in November 2001. After the training, the

joint WWF/Ranger teams conducted wildlife sign surveys and camera trapping in previously unsurveyed areas of Phnom Prich. WWF staff reinforced the previous training by supervising and advising on how the new rangers used their skills in observation, recording data, and interviewing local resource users—essential skills for use in routine patrolling and monitoring.

In January 2002, the Cambodian Ministry of the Environment asked WWF to lead recruitment of new Phnom Prich rangers with an aim to better represent local communities on the Wildlife Sanctuary staff. Fifteen new rangers were hired from communities located in or adjacent to the Wildlife Sanctuary, which includes ethnic Phnong, the local indigenous people.

Community Management

WWF is working with communities in and around Phnom Phrich and Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuaries in Monduliri province to raise awareness of their rights and responsibilities regarding natural resource use, advocate for policy reform, and build community management capacity. (See 3.1 for more detail.)

Objective III: Promote a supportive policy environment for conservation and sustainable natural resource management

Result 3.1: Community Management of Natural Resources: The MOSAIC Project

Management of Strategic Areas for Integrated Conservation (MOSAIC) engages local communities in developing and maintaining management systems to protect the biodiversity of the Central Annamites and maintain the integrity of indigenous tenure. It facilitates cooperation among communities, provincial officials and national agencies in conservation and participatory land-use planning. The project has been launched within each of the focal priority landscapes in the FLM. Both of these projects have been designed on a two-year project cycle.

Eastern Plains

MOSAIC's initial activities during this period focused on influencing community forest policy, building local capacity, and coordinating existing conservation efforts.

Influencing Community Resource Use Policy

Rural communities in Cambodia have very limited understanding of the rights and constraints in Cambodian resource use laws. A joint WWF/Monduliri Province team spearheaded this project to increase community's ability to understand and affect policies governing their use of natural resources.

First, the joint team identified a key set of Cambodian laws and regulations that impact rural communities and their management of natural resources. These legal instruments include: the existing Forestry Law, the draft new Forestry Law, the new Land Law, the draft Community Forestry Sub-Decree, the draft Community Fisheries Sub-Decree, the draft Wildlife Law, and a nascent draft Protected Areas Law. Second, the joint team with the assistance of Todd Sigaty (a lawyer working on Forest Law, Land Law, Community Forestry Sub Decree, Wildlife Law and Protected Areas Law) drafted a rural rights training manual. The manual includes relevant articles from the laws translated into everyday language in order to be readily understood. Third, two workshops were organized. One for provincial authorities in Stung Treng, was organized to discuss how relevant laws and regulations could be most effectively presented to resource-dependent communities throughout northeastern Cambodia.

The workshop in Stung Treng included the following elements:

- Summary of Cambodian political and legal system;
- Review of key laws and articles related to natural resource management;
- Discussion of rights and responsibilities, including land based tenure, natural resource use, management and conservation, procedural, and human rights;
- Development of initial strategies and materials for the process of community awareness.

A second follow-up workshop on rights and responsibilities and strategy development was conducted in Monduliri from 19 to 22 of February 2002. There were 39 participants from different NGOs, IOs and Government and provincial levels who attended this workshop.

The draft action plan resulting from this workshop includes the following:

- Assess the level of understanding on resource rights and responsibilities of selected local communities (March 2002)
- Consultation with relevant organizations (NGOs and other project) and reviewing strategies (April and May 2002)
- Consultation with technical departments and gain approval (May-June 2002)
- Informal meetings with relevant technical staff (April-July 2002)
- Develop and distribute final document (October-December 2002)
- Attend training course on Participatory Biodiversity Assessment-PBA (27-30, March)
- Field Assessment of PBA (31 March to 10 April 2002)

Building Capacity

In addition to advocating for policy reform, MOSAIC is building the capacity for improved community participation. WWF held a training course for Participatory Biodiversity Assessment (PBA) in Sen Monorum, Monduliri, on March 27-30, 2002. The twenty participants included the MOSAIC core team from Phnom Penh, species specialists, six provincial counterparts, and Huy Keavuth, the WWF-Cambodia GIS/Data Manager. Huy also helped with the training on GPS use and accompanied the field teams in their follow-up surveys. The training focused on the rationale for community participation in biodiversity monitoring, plus the biological and ecological details needed from communities for their effective participation in monitoring and managing biodiversity in priority sites.

After the training session, the participants divided into two fieldwork teams, one focusing on the area to the south of Phnom Prich in Kh'nheng in Me Mang Commune and the other on the north in the communities of Srey Thom Sok San Commune. The teams obtained information on the presence or absence of key species identified in the June 2001 Dry Forests Conservation Workshop, the relative abundance of these species, and their distribution in the lands surrounding the villages. This information will be used to identify which areas should receive protection or conservation management status when communities produce their land-use planning maps later in the process.

Related Projects

MOSAIC's activities in policy reform and capacity building complement the ongoing Resource Rights and Participatory Planning (RRaPP) project supported by WWF and the Asia Foundation, which grew out of the Dry Forests Conservation Strategy Workshop held in Phnom Penh last year.

The RRaPP project was developed to strengthen governance of natural resources in target areas of northeastern Cambodia. It involved the design and delivery of training courses for a

provincial team and initial preparation for fieldwork. This training and preparatory work was carried out during the wet season from June to December 2001. The key activities of the project included the following:

- Pilot Community Resource Mapping and Needs Assessment
- Training and Fieldwork on Economic Valuation of Resources
- Rights and Responsibilities Training
- Development of a Participatory Land Use Planning Framework and Manual
- Setting a Basis for Natural Resource Policy Analysis, Advocacy, and Feedback/Coordination of Activities

Coordinating Conservation

At the end of January, WWF convened Cambodian NGOs focusing on organizing and advocacy for resin-tapping communities (NGO Forum, Australian Catholic Relief, and SSP) Resin tapping is an important community-based natural resource income generating activity vital to poor rural communities in the Dry Forests. Participants discussed potential and existing policy and legal work (particularly for the Community Forestry Sub-Decree) and identified the need, from a conservation standpoint, for clearly defined terminology used in legal work.

WWF convened 2 meetings in Phnom Penh with representatives from 8 separate projects on community awareness and one workshop in Stung Treng for community-based natural resource management projects active in the Northeast. WWF shared its work to date on community rights and responsibilities within the Cambodian legal framework, which includes a large amount of background research and data collation. The other NGOs are now able to use and disseminate this information in their own project areas, increasing the efficiency of community work and reducing potential redundancies.

Central Annamites

The MOSAIC project in the Central Annamites was initiated in Quang Nam province and focused on building community management capacity and identifying pilot sites for community forest management. In November, Quang Nam province provided permission for the project and nominated the provincial Forest Protection Department (FPD) as the co-executors of the project. In January, the FPD provided and equipped an office for the project team. Project staff include: one international conservation biologist and participatory conservation specialist, three provincial staff and a provincial GIS specialist.

Capacity Building

WWF provided startup funds to the reserve management board for essential equipment such as motorbikes, telecommunication equipment and basic electricity supplies for two existing guard stations. In a significant move, Quang Nam province provided additional funding for a reserve headquarters. This is an important success as it is rare in Vietnam for such scale of conservation investment to come from Provincial budgets without pressure from central government.

WWF also supported two training activities in Song Thanh. The first training, intended for forest guards, was in biodiversity conservation. In an example of shifting attitudes since WWF's involvement here, the Vice-Director of the Quang Nam Forest Protection Department extended participation to include representatives from the local community, in particular members of the Women's Union.

The second training course, for the management board of the Song Thanh reserve, examined how to address community resource needs in the development of a protected area. Forest

guards were trained in community participatory conservation techniques and given the opportunity to conduct actual Participatory Rural Appraisal surveys within the communities surrounding the reserve.

These two trainings resulted not only in improved capacity but also in improved park/community cooperation. For example, a month after these trainings, a community member alerted the forest guards of a possible tiger print within 50 meters of the new Song Thanh Nature Reserve headquarters. The rangers were able to confirm and classify the print, according to their recent training.

Community Forest Management

Two pilot sites for community based forest management have already been identified based on a survey conducted by a joint WWF/Quang Nam Forest Protection Department team. One area of 4000 hectares in northern Quang Nam, previously managed by the State based Forest Enterprise, has already been handed over to the local community. Negotiations are presently underway to establish whether the site is suitable as a model for incentive driven biodiversity conservation. The second site is situated along the northern border of Song Thanh Reserve where a major road (The Ho Chi Minh Highway 14b) is being constructed to link the main highway with roads in Lao PDR. The forests along the road are threatened by the expansion of the road network and are also critical for poor communities comprised mainly of local ethnic minorities.

Result 3.2: Promote Sustainable Forest Management

The major events during the reporting period were the establishment of the Forest Sector Support Program in Vietnam, the acceptance of a pilot certification project in Lao, and the halt on the issuance of logging permits in Cambodia since January 2002.

Vietnam

The recently approved Forest Development Strategy 2001 – 2010 of Vietnam contains a new priority program on sustainable forest management. This is the result of more than three years support to sustainable forest management and the National Working Group in Vietnam. WWF will support implementation of this new strategy through its participation in the Forest Sector Support Program.

In November 2001, the Government of Vietnam and 19 donor and international organizations signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on the Forest Sector Support Program (FSSP). The key documents signed were the MoA, principles for cooperation in the forest sector and a program framework with 9 result areas. The FSSP will be based on four operational documents: the common work program, the matrix of affiliations, the forest manual and a monitoring and evaluation system. WWF has actively contributed since then to develop the common work program, the matrix and the M&E system and represents the seven international NGOs in the Technical Executive Committee of the FSSP. The contributions to those operational documents were geared at the integration of elements of biodiversity conservation, the landscape approach and sustainable forest management.

WWF contributed to sustainable forest management in Vietnam with the following activities:

- The Swiss Government agreed to add a regional component for Lao PDR and Cambodia to the three-year project "Promotion of Sustainable Forest Management in Vietnam" to ensure

regional trade of timber and related illegal logging activities are assessed. The project is likely to start in summer 2002.

- The four Central Annamite provinces of Dak Lak, Kontum, Gia Lai and Lam Dong account for more than half of the annual logging quota from Vietnam's natural forest. Most of the forest areas within these provinces have been under the management of State Forest Enterprises. WWF successfully promoted development of provincial level sustainable forest management, by providing technical assistance and a small financial grant. The initiative received active support by Vice-Minister Nguyen Van Dang. A selection of the startup activities will be supported by the Swiss funded project. Additional activities will potentially be included in the new ADB Forests for Livelihood Program in the Central Annamites.
- WWF contributed to a sustainable forest management feasibility study at two State Forest Enterprises located between two nature reserves in Gia Lai province—a critical forest complex of the Central Annamites Priority Areas.
- The National Working Group (NWG) on Sustainable Forest Management received a grant of 40,000 USD from the Ford Foundation to gain endorsement by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and to accept the National Standards as Vietnam FSC standards. WWF helped propose NWG members to FSC and assisted with the application procedure. In addition, WWF increased the capacity of the NWG by facilitating the participation of two members at a forest management and certification training in Ecuador.

Cambodia

In response to the poor quality and progress of the Cambodian forestry reform process WWF, donors, and other NGOs focused their efforts on advocating for a complete logging moratorium until satisfactory management plans were approved. (Only 2 out of 17 former concessionaires have recently submitted their forest management plans to the Department of Forests and Wildlife, due September 2001.) As of January 1, 2002, the Cambodian government suspended issuance of all logging permits until concessionaires have submitted 'a new forest concession management plan consistent with legislation and technical regulations' (MAFF 2001).

This success, however, may be temporary. There is still heavy pressure on the Cambodia timber market from other countries in the region that do not require improved forest management standards or certification. In addition, the relatively slow process of the forestry reform in Cambodia compared with its original schedule has put on hold any new initiatives in the forestry sector. Unless the proper legal safeguards are in place, completion of the new concession management plans may result in renewed logging without adequate protection from regional demand.

In response, WWF has taken the following actions:

- WWF is lobbying with the independent monitor Global Witness, the NGO Forum and other NGO for more transparency of the reform process and the acceptance of commitments made in the past by the Government and major donors with regard to illegal logging and the concession review.
- WWF is active in the consultation process underway to develop a community forestry sub-decree in Cambodia. The consultation process has allowed key stakeholders (including many local communities and community representatives) an opportunity to contribute to the development of the sub-decree itself and generated momentum for implementing a community forestry program once the decree passes.

The decree has already passed through an internal review at the Department of Forestry and Wildlife and is now at the Ministry of Agriculture Forests and Fisheries (MAFF) for a final review before going to the Council of Ministers.

- Seng Teak (Dry Forests Manager) represented WWF Cambodia on the Task Force Secretariat (TFS) formed to develop the draft Protected Areas Law. TFS consists of five representatives from government ministries including Environment, Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Land Management Urban Planning and Construction, Tourism, and Justice; three representatives from Virachey NP, Bokor NP, and Aural WC; and representatives from UNDP, WCS, WWF, and NGOs Forum.
- WWF presented a regional perspective on sustainable forest management in a regional workshop to promote SFM, held in Phnom Penh in December 2001 and organized by FAO and GTZ. The Department of Forests and Wildlife (DFW) hosted the workshop which laid the groundwork for better understanding of forest certification requirements and prospects in the region and in Cambodia.

Lao

In Laos' natural production forests, long-term management plans are now available in pilot village forest areas and some concessions. The area covered by a concession management plan can be relatively high (more than 200,000 ha). However, forest management capacity is limited and environmental and social safeguards are not yet integrated into the current forest management system (although mandated by law and incorporated into pilot initiatives). Village forestry, a participatory management strategy, is high on the political agenda. The Lao Government approved in principle a pilot project by FINIDA that will certify existing village forest management schemes consisting of 20,000 ha. WWF has been asked by FINIDA to organize national and provincial awareness and training workshops.

Result 3.3: Promote the control of illegal wildlife trade in Laos

One of the key threats to wildlife throughout Lao PDR is the illegal poaching and trade of wildlife. Laos is situated between Vietnam and China both of whom are large markets for illegal wildlife which is valued for its use in traditional medicine, culinary delicacies, and as pets. Laos is the only country in the region that has not acceded to the CITES convention and key decision-makers within the Lao Government are for the most part unfamiliar with CITES and its implementation. This project was designed to give the Government of Lao a clear understanding of the relevance of CITES within the country and the region and to provide a clear understanding of how to accede and implement CITES after ascension.

Since October 1, 2001 the following activities have been completed:

- 1. Training of Trainers on the Forestry Laws of Lao PDR and the CITES convention -**
This workshop was conducted at the Department of Forestry office in Vientiane from October 15th - 26th 2001. Fifty-two participants attended the workshop including representatives from all of the provincial forestry offices; Dong Dok forest college; the Muang Mai forestry technical school; the Xeang Ngeunh, Houey Yang and Xe pone agriculture and forestry training centers; the department of inspection of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and; all divisions of the Department of Forestry.

The workshop was conducted by three TRAFFIC staff, a member of the British Council, and the Department of Forest Resource Conservation. The workshops included sessions on the importance of Wildlife Trade in Asia, law enforcement and wildlife trade, identification of illegal wildlife goods, training techniques, and forestry law in Lao PDR. All participants to the workshop were enthusiastic about forestry law and wildlife trade enforcement and the evaluation of the workshop was very positive.

2. Training Course for Forestry staff and wildlife officials at the provincial and district level - These courses were conducted in three different provinces of Lao PDR:

- Phongsaly province, from November 19th to 22nd 2001, including 69 participants from Luang Namtha, Houaphan, Bokeo, Luangphabang, Sayaburi and Oudomsay provinces
- Vientiane Province, from December 4th to 7th 2001, including 53 participants from Xeang Khuang, Xaisomboun Special Zone, Vientiane Municipality, Vientiane, Bolikhamsay & Khammoune provinces
- Attapeu province, from December 18th to 21st 2001, including 53 participants from Savannaket, Salavanh, Champasack and Xe Kong provinces. (see Annex 1 for participant list)

3. Training Course for border crossing officials - These courses were conducted in three different provinces of Lao PDR:

- Bokeo province, from November 24th to 26th 2001, including 53 participants from local and international border checkpoints within the 7 provinces of northern Lao PDR.
- Bolikhamsay province, from December 10th to 12th 2001, including 37 participants from local and international border checkpoint within the 6 provinces of central Lao PDR.
- Champasack province, from December 24th to 26th 2001, including 37 participant from local and international border checkpoint within the 5 provinces of southern Lao PDR.

Both training courses for the provincial and district staff and for the border check point staff used material compiled during the Training of Trainers workshop and were conducted by the Department of Forest Resource Conservation under guidance of the Department of Forestry.

Accession to the CITES convention is now supported by all of the relevant government agencies from the field offices to the Ministerial level. The Department of Forestry, all of the Provincial Forestry Offices, and the relevant ministries who took part in the National Workshop are in favour of Laos accession to the convention. Upon completion of the provincial workshops the participants proposed to Department of Forestry that they should make an official proposal to the Government of Lao PDR to consider accession to the CITES convention, which was done in the form of a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In addition to this proposal from within the Department of Forestry, WWF was asked by the Department of Forest Resource Conservation to write a letter to the Ministry of Foreign affairs clearly stating how to carry out accession to the CITES convention.

Objective IV: Lay the foundation for lasting conservation

Result 4.1: FLM Ecoregion Information System

In February, the team of Vietnamese consultants completed the framework for the Information System. The FLM Information System serves several functions:

- a facility for storing data and information pertinent to the ecoregion program including digital spatial information including satellite data, digital copies of reports, biological and socio-economic data and information
- an easily accessible source of information for partners and stakeholders
- a facility for storing and cataloguing photographs (photolibrary)
- a facility for providing up to date information on projects in the ecoregion
- a database of contacts including partners and stakeholders

The system has been designed using a web style format. This not only means the system user friendly but also that components of the information system can be uploaded regularly to the FLM Ecoregion Website. Already the photolibrary has been installed and uploaded to the website. The Information System Officer is now prioritizing the compilation of data and collating it within the system.

Although not formally “launched” the system has already being regularly used by both WWF and key partners. Representatives from World Bank, the Finnish development agency (FINNIDA), TRAFFIC, UNDP and CARE International have used the system.

Result 4.2: Developing sustainable financing systems

Significant new initiatives are underway in the region, particularly in Vietnam, to investigate and establish potential sustainable finance systems for biodiversity conservation. Presently one of the most significant proposals is to setup a sinking fund from GEF led by the World Bank for the protected area system in Vietnam. The proposal aims to focus the funds on the priority protected areas in the Greater Annamites Ecoregion.

WWF is also collaborating with a major review of the economic value of protected areas in the Mekong Basin presently being conducted. The aim of the review is to demonstrate to the relevant ministries in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand that effective protected area management provides significant national and regional economic benefits and is therefore worthy of substantial investment. The ultimate aim of the project is to encourage governments to provide the finance to sustain biodiversity conservation.

Once the landscape action plans are completed or near to completion, WWF will contract a sustainable finance expert to examine ways of financing the action plan. Each action plan will then have a supporting business or financing plan to facilitate its successful implementation. These landscape-based activities (as with all the landscape activities) can provide a model for developing similar activities at the ecoregion scale.

Result 4.3: Community Participation for Conservation Success: Promoting community participation towards effective conservation of Vietnam's natural heritage through community-based Environmental Education

Funds for this project have been released in June 2002 and activities will begin in August.

Objective V: Marine Conservation Initiatives for Con Dao National Park

Result 5.1.

Coral reef ecosystems database established:

Based on existing information, a database of coral reefs in Con Dao is currently being established by the Marine and Coastal program of WWF Indochina in order to manage and monitor the marine resources of Con Dao NP. The structure and layout of the system has broadly been developed, and the final stages of fine-tuning are currently in progress. Once this has been completed, work will begin on data entry and producing a Vietnamese language version.

Increased capacity for enforcement and monitor the environmental effectiveness of environmental regulations

In December 2001, two communications events about threats to the marine environment around Con Dao were held for fishermen and secondary school pupils. Fifty people, comprised of 40 local fishermen and 10 fishmongers, joined the first session where they were provided with basic information about Environmental Protection Laws, threats to the marine environment, local regulations on banned fishing methods, fishing seasons, and environmental protection. At the second event, 60 pupils of the Vo Thi Sau secondary school were introduced to basic information on Environmental Protection Laws, the biological diversity of Con Dao forests and sea, and threats to this diversity.

Local people also had the opportunity during these communication sessions to give comments on what should be done in the future to protect the environment. Some extremely useful ideas and feedback were generated by this exercise, such as the suggestion that there should be a system to disseminate useful information to newcomers and that people should be informed about areas where dugong are usually found locally so they could avoid fishing in those areas.

Action plan for dugong and marine turtle conservation in Con Dao NP

Mr. Nicholas Cox was employed in March 2002 as a consultant to develop the marine species action plans and funding avenues for marine species conservation projects, with particular reference to Dugongs and Marine Turtles. His experience gained from working closely with the dugong and marine turtle conservation activities on Con Dao will be invaluable to the project. An integral part of this post is the development of regional cooperation between Vietnam and Cambodia.

From 7th to 16th Mar 2002, a study tour to Thailand was organised for Con Dao National Park' staff and officers of Con Dao People's Committee. This was conducted with the aim of linking the marine conservation programme in Con Dao, especially in terms of dugong and sea turtle conservation activities, with marine conservation undertaken in other countries of Southeast Asia. The study tour also aimed at improving capacity for Con Dao National Park' staff in the field of conservation as well as strengthening cooperation between Con Dao National Park and other organizations and agencies all over the region.

A particular highlight was the chance to learn from a community-based leatherback turtle conservation project at Maikhao beach in Phuket province – a project where all activities were initiated and conducted by the community itself with only some technical support from scientists and research institutes. The study tour also provided an opportunity to introduce Vietnam's biodiversity richness and experiences gained in conserving endangered species at Con Dao.

Two specialists from the Fisheries Protection Department were hired during January 2002 to review the legal framework related to Turtle Conservation in Vietnam. The review showed that there are currently no regulations specifically aimed at protecting sea turtles, only broader

regulations to protect rare and precious sea creatures (that include sea turtles). These broad regulations do not fully cover the issues pertinent to sea turtles. This weakness is one of the major elements hindering conservation of sea turtles in Vietnam.

Table of Progress

| <u>Benchmark Number</u> | <u>Benchmark/Output</u> | <u>Status*</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| 1.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Committee for Greater Annamites in Lao established Dry Forests Coalition formed Meeting between the two national steering committees for the Greater Annamites held | On-track |
| 1.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training workshop and communications strategy completed Dry Forest study tour conducted Video for the Annamites produced Video for the Dry Forests produced CD-ROM for the Annamites produced | On-track |
| 1.3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan (and M&E plan) for the Greater Annamites produced Action Plan (and M&E plan) for the Dry Forests produced | On-track On-track |
| 2.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity model produced Song Thanh start up project Strategy and Action plan completed and endorsed by governments and partners | On-track |
| 2.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape Manager appointed Provincial zonation plan for Mondulkiri completed Rights and Responsibilities awareness activities conducted Wildlife law enforcement activities conducted | Completed On-track Completed On-track |
| 3.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity surveys conducted Studies on hunting practices and resource use completed Model for community based M&E established | On-track |
| 3.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued promotion of sustainable forestry practices in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam WWF as signatory of the Vietnam Forest Sector Support Partnership | On-track Completed |
| 4.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecoregion Information system established | On-track |
| 4.2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable finance mechanisms identified | On-track |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 4.3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Participation for Conservation Success project implemented | On-track (delayed because of funding delay) |
| 5.1 | Con Dao, Vietnam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report and set of baseline data explaining the present status of the coral reef ecosystem completed. A team of park staff and their families trained as trainers in sustainable management of marine natural resources. | Completed On-track |

**Status may include activities that are completed, on-track, delayed, mixed performance, or cancelled.*

Next Steps

As a number of key results will be achieved during forthcoming months, it will be a very exciting period for the FLM ecoregion program.

- **The Central Annamites Initiative** will be officially launched once the strategy and action plan are completed and endorsed by partners and key stakeholders. This will be a significant landmark for the program. An action plan for the Eastern Plains will be drafted during the next six months, based on the model provided by the Central Annamites.
- **Constituency for the Forests of the Lower Mekong:** Activities over the past two years have been aimed at developing a constituency for conservation in the Forests of the Lower Mekong. In the next six months, official partnerships will be drawn up and action plans for the Greater Annamites and Dry Forests focal ecoregions collaboratively designed
- **Communications activities:** Key decision makers in the Central Indochina Dry Forests will participate in a study tour to Sri Lanka and India. A number of key communication materials will be produced such as promotional videos for each ecoregion and CD-ROMs with reports, photographs, facts and other awareness components. A clear strategy for communicating the ecoregion at all levels and partners will be produced as a real life exercise in a training workshop.
- **MOSAIC projects:** The development of better management for key strategic areas outside of protected areas will be reach a critical stage as data will have been collected and design of new innovative management plans will be underway in close cooperation with local communities and government partners. This project provides a key model for improving general management of biodiversity through consensus agreements on priorities.

Success Stories

Ecoregion Program as Leader in Conservation in the Greater Annamites

The World Bank is preparing a proposal for an 11 Million US Dollar sinking fund to provide critical baseline funding for protected areas in Vietnam. Originally proposed to cover all of Vietnam, the sinking fund will now only be made available for the protected areas in the Annamites, based on its priority status as laid out in the Biovision and consultations with WWF. This is a clear indicator of support and recognition of the ecoregion program and the value of its strategic approach. At the landscape level, two more landscape scale initiatives are now being planned. One for the Northern Annamites (led by the EU) and one for the Southern Annamites (led by WWF with support from the Netherlands Government).

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Kon Plong

The “Sustainable Forest Management of the Kon Plong Forest Complex” project was created to support the Government of Vietnam's policy to establish sustainable forestry practices in Vietnam. An innovative partnership between a private company (ScanCom), the Tropical Forest Trust (a consortium of companies trading in tropical hardwoods), the Government of Vietnam, and WWF was established to implement sustainable forestry practices in Kon Plong Forest Complex. The partnership committed to manage 40% of the forest specifically for biodiversity conservation, while undertaking commercially viable forestry practices throughout the rest of the complex in line with both national and international certification standards. After the initial biodiversity assessment of the forest complex was completed and published, however, Kontum province retracted its commitment and refused to provide its portion of funding for the rest of the project.

In response, WWF is lobbying at the provincial and national level for Kontum province to renew its participation in the project. Due to the reluctance of Kontum provincial authorities, the Royal Netherlands Embassy withdrew their support to Kontum province, but offered WWF the opportunity to present alternatives with the Vietnamese partners for other potential areas suitable for sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation.

Dry Forests

A lack of information on the conservation status of the Indochina Dry Forests and the institutional capacity to carry out conservation action remain key challenges to WWF's work in Cambodia and specifically, the Eastern Plains. Many areas of the ecoregion have only recently been opened to outsiders following decades of internal strife. The depth of the need for information and skills is beyond the ability of any one organization to address and requires a coordinated effort by the international community.

WWF is focusing much of our efforts in the Dry Forests on gathering data and building capacity both for government officials and community members (see 3.1). In addition, the process we facilitated to create a biological vision for the Forests of the Lower Mekong has contributed in part to increased conservation investment in the ecoregion. At least three International NGOs, three local NGOs and two government partners are now conducting conservation activities throughout the Dry Forests, including three GEFs in the pipeline and a million dollar International Tropical Timber Organization project.

Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion

Description of site

The Sulu Sulawesi and Banda-Flores Seas harbor the most biologically diverse assemblage of marine life known anywhere on Earth. The ecoregion hosts over 80 coral genera and more than 450 species of coral. This rich resource base also provides a livelihood for over 50 million people and is a major economic engine of the regional economy. Tragically, this flourishing of life is under siege from human population growth, destructive fishing practices, poorly planned development, over-consumption, pollution, and insufficient conservation resources and capacity. The recent economic and social strife in Indonesia has exacerbated regional marine resource degradation as economic urgencies force people into unsustainable exploitation. However, with a major portion of its economy based on marine products, long-term sustainability of these resources is a key to the economic recovery of Indonesia. In the face of urgent conservation and economic sustainability priorities, existing management efforts are not sufficient to protect priority marine resources across this vast area. As a result, WWF is multiplying its collaborative conservation action in the region with a focus on key sites and strengthening economic incentives for conservation. The long-term conservation imperative is to create both models and mechanisms to enhance the spread of conservation management across key priority areas such that the ecological and economic integrity of these globally outstanding marine ecoregions is maintained in perpetuity.

Strategic Goals & Objectives

The ultimate goal of WWF's marine conservation program in the Sulu-Sulawesi and Banda-Flores Seas is to enhance the long-term ecological and economic sustainability of the natural resources and biological diversity of these high priority marine ecoregions. In a biological prioritization (Biodiversity Vision) workshop facilitated by WWF last year, a group of over 80 regional scientists and conservation managers articulated the following biodiversity vision statement for the SSME:

"A marine ecoregion that remains a globally unique center of biodiversity, with vibrant ecological integrity, including all species, assemblages, communities, habitats, and ecological processes. A highly productive ecoregion that sustainably and equitably provides for the socio-economic and cultural needs of the human communities dependent on it. An ecoregion where biodiversity and productivity are sustained through the generations by participatory and collaboration management across all political and cultural boundaries"

To help achieve this vision, WWF is developing a network of conservation efforts in priority areas across the Sulu-Sulawesi and Banda-Flores Seas. Bunaken and Bali Barat Parks are key anchors sites for this network of conservation areas. WWF is using conservation programs at sites such as Bali Barat and Bunaken as a launching pad for the expansion of conservation effort both across a network of sites in the marine ecoregions and in areas adjacent to these high priority sites. By establishing a strong model for multi-stakeholder conservation at Bunaken and Bali Barat National Parks, WWF is helping to demonstrate which approaches can be successful, thus setting the foundation for expansion to adjacent and other priority areas of the

SSME and Eastern Indonesian Seas. WWF is spearheading this expansion while working with numerous partners to help support their efforts to expand conservation. Other priority areas where WWF is working are found throughout the Philippines and Malaysia, such as Balayan Bay, Eastern Sabah, Northern Palawan, the Cagayan Ridge, and others. In addition, WWF is working with TNC and others toward expansion of conservation efforts into the Sangihe Talau Islands in Northern Sulawesi and is setting up programs in Bali to generate funding to help support conservation both throughout Bali and Eastern Indonesia.

WWF's long-term goal is to create an ecoregion-wide network of MPAs, but international tensions between the SSME countries makes this difficult at present. To lay the groundwork for the international cooperation necessary for such a network, however, WWF is working to develop a conservation strategy to protect marine turtles. Success on this more discrete initiative will serve to build trust between the three countries. Malaysia and the Philippines are already cooperating on the protection of the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area (TIHPA), making the addition of Indonesia a relatively short step. Tri-national management of this species is crucial as Indonesia is home to the largest turtle nesting area in the three countries and is also a major user of marine turtles. The initiative will emphasize expanding the existing marine turtle strategy for the TIHPA to the much larger area between Sabah, Malaysia, the Sulu Archipelago, Philippines, and East Kalimantan, Indonesia (referred to as the Tri-National Area.)

Under this USAID funded project, WWF's Ecoregion Conservation approach is supported by two mutually reinforcing objectives:

Project Objectives:

- I. Enhancing conservation action at critical marine sites in the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas and Banda-Flores Seas
- II. Formulating a tri-national strategy to protect marine turtles and their habitats as a first step to creating a tri-national ecologically representative network of MPAs across the SSME

Collaborators/Partners

Objective I

- * Bunaken National Park Authority – North Sulawesi
- * Management Board of Bunaken National Park
- * NRM II – USAID Project
- * North Sulawesi Watersports Association (NSWA)
- * Team Raja Laut- Bunaken
- * Government of North Sulawesi
- * Bali Barat National Park Authority – Bali
- * Dive operators / sports association in Bali (Gahawisri)
- * Tourism association in Bali
- * Bali Government (Environmental Bureau and Maritime & Fisheries Agency)
- * Bali Barat-based Resorts Hotels
- * Police and Navy Forces in Bali
- * Department of Maritime and Fisheries

- * Marine Aquarium Council

Objective II

- * Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
- * Fisheries Department of Sabah, Malaysia
- * Sabah Parks, Malaysia
- * Wildlife Department of Sabah, Malaysia
- * Ministry of Marine and Fisheries Affairs, Indonesia
- * Office of the Ministry of Environment, Indonesia
- * BAPELDA (Local Environment Office), Indonesia
- * Sangalaki Dive Lodge, Indonesia
- * Derawan Dive Lodge, Indonesia
- * Hotel Sederhana, Indonesia
- * Sub Seksi KSDA (Sub-district Office for the Conservation of Natural Resources), Indonesia
- * PARIWISATA (Tourism Office), Berau, Indonesia
- * Kalbu (Local NGO), Indonesia
- * Bestari (Local NGO), Indonesia
- * BKSDA Kaltim, Indonesia
- * Youth Organization of Derawan, Indonesia
- * KEHATI (Local NGO), Indonesia
- * Badan Kesatuan Bangsa and Linmas (Social and Political Office), Berau, Indonesia
- * Bupati (Head of Berau District), Indonesia
- * Community Leaders and members of Derawan Island
- * The Indonesian Coastal and Marine Foundation
- * Ministry of Forestry, Indonesia
- * Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines
- * Maritime and Ocean Affairs Center, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines
- * Bantay Pawikan, Inc., Philippines

Summary

Objective I: Enhancing conservation action at critical marine sites.

WWF has intensified efforts to help local constituencies manage and conserve the outstanding resources of the two pilot sites, Bunaken National Park in North Sulawesi and Bali Barat National Park in Bali, increasing patrol effectiveness, expanding partnerships, and building capacity for marine management. In addition, WWF has magnified the lessons learned from the Friends of the Reef Initiative to the biodiversity rich Derawan Isles. Some of the most notable accomplishments of the program within this reporting period include:

- * A multi-stakeholder patrolling system to protect the marine area of Bali Barat National Park has been in place since February 2002. This achievement was accomplished through a series of meetings with related stakeholders between November 2001 and February 2002. The purpose of the meetings was to develop patrol guidelines and procedures, establish a task-force, and finally, to provide training.

- * A Code of Conduct (COC) for divers visiting Bali Barat National Park has been developed, and will be officially legalized and announced in May 2002. Similar to the patrolling system, this result was also accomplished through a series of meetings with stakeholders, in particular the dive operators that operate in the area.
- * The existing management conservation plan operating in Bunaken—including the patrolling mechanism—was introduced to the Derawan isles. Derawan is slated to become a marine protected area in the near future.
- * Training on the spawning aggregation sites (SPAGS) of groupers was conducted in Manado for 15 participants from various agencies. In addition to increasing capacity to identify spawning aggregation sites and spawning behavior of the grouper and Napoleon wrases, the training established a SPAGS monitoring team.

NOTE: These activities have been supported by 2001 EAPEI funds, following a two-year strategy detailed in WWF's 2001 Implementation Plan. Additional activities in Bunaken -- detailed in the 2002 Implementation Plan -- will start in June 2002 following disbursement of a new 2002 EAPEI grant, which was delayed for several months.

Objective II: *Activities under this objective will also be initiated in June 2002 with the release of funds from a 2002 EAPEI grant to WWF.*

Objective III: *Formulating a tri-national marine turtle protection strategy.*

WWF launched this new program by establishing the necessary institutional framework to support tri-national cooperation, initiating outreach and advocacy efforts, and starting to build the necessary capacity to create an effective strategy. Notable accomplishments within this reporting period include:

- * On November 2001, at a Joint Management Committee (JMC) of the Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area (TIHPA) meeting in Kota Kinabalu, WWF proposed the TIHPA be expanded to include Derawan Islands in East Kalimantan in order to pave the way for the development of a tri-national initiative on sea turtle conservation in the SSME. WWF was able to harness full support, not only of government agencies, but also of the local NGOs and some members of the community in Derawan as well.
- * On March 27-31, 2002, the first tri-national training on sea turtle biology and conservation was conducted under the guidance and mentorship of Dr. Colin Limpus, a world-renowned sea turtle specialist. A total of 26 participants from the three countries attended the training: 4 Malaysians, 4 Filipinos and 18 Indonesians. The training was a mix of classroom sessions and field exposure that covered topics on species identification, nesting activities, census techniques, tagging and morphology, nesting beach management; safe turtle egg handling practices, hatchery management and ecotourism.
- * Presentation and feedback meetings were held before and after the tri-national training for to the community members in Derawan Island to reinforce community (village level) support and involvement. The villagers welcomed this initiative and requested that WWF involve them in every stages of the sea turtle conservation program.

- * Immediately following the training, WWF conducted a technical workshop in Tanjung Redeb, Berau, Indonesia from April 1-3, 2002. Sixty-two participants representing government agencies, non-government organizations and academic institutions attended the workshop. The workshop was delivered as a consensus building exercise—a traditional process of decision-making in Asia. Through this workshop, participants agreed on the need to develop a tri-national conservation program for sea turtle. They worked on the following activities to meet their goal: (1) review population status, existing management, and challenges for sea turtle conservation in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines; (2) validate the need for a tri-national management program; (3) formulate a tri-national conservation program; and (4) generate an action plan.

Results by Objective and Activity

Activity Descriptions

Objective I: Enhancing conservation action at critical marine sites in the Eastern Indonesia and the Sulu-Sulawesi seas

Currently, most if not all marine conservation/protected areas in Indonesia are insufficiently managed to ensure the long-term persistence of their critical marine resources and their ecological integrity. There is too little marine sciences and management capacity among individuals, too little awareness on the ecological and economics importance of the parks and other reef areas, too little support for conservation action directed against exploitative uses, and too few financial and human resources to handle management needs. As a result, the critical marine resources at numerous important marine sites continue to decline, including those harbored in Bunaken and Bali Barat National Parks. Enhancing conservation action to protect and restore healthy marine ecosystems is accomplished through partnership development, empowerment, and magnification of experience in a particular area to other important sites. Strengthening stakeholder partnerships is particularly crucial in this era of decentralization. The initial sites for this initiative are at Bunaken and Bali Barat National Parks.

Many encouraging improvements in marine conservation have been achieved during this reporting period. The increased cooperation between organizations through the Friends of the Reef program has produced tremendous enthusiasm from various stakeholders in both sites (Bunaken and Bali Barat National Parks). Law enforcement to protect and monitor the integrity of the conserved areas is in place for Bali Barat National Park based on the successful model developed in Bunaken. New partnership such as that with academicians from Udayana University – Bali, is providing new insight into the effort to increase public awareness regarding the effect of destructive fishing practice; effects such as low quality and susceptibility of fish yields to potential pathogens that may cause human hazards.

Results for Activity 1.1: The Friends of the Reef Initiative, Indonesia

In Bunaken, collaboration between WWF and USAID II Project, as well as other partners, is focused on the intensification of the previous work—particularly in relation to patrolling activities. Priority has also been given to strengthening and widening existing partnerships, eliciting

stakeholder interest in the conservation management, building capacity for effective marine management, and setting a long-term conservation financing scheme through dive fees. With support from The Nature Conservancy and other National NGO's, magnification of the experience from Bunaken was introduced into the Derawan isles: another biodiversity-rich area within the SSME ecoregion. Derawan is slated to become a marine protected area in the near future. In Bali Barat, priority was given to maximizing the work of the multi-stakeholders patrolling task force, as well as developing a Code of conduct (COC) for divers visiting the area.

Results of Activity 1.1.1: Monitoring & Enforcement

In Bunaken, as stated in the project implementation plan, WWF is drawing on its skills to facilitate community involvement and strengthen existing patrolling efforts by members of the North Sulawesi Water Sports Association (NSWA) and the new developed Bunaken Management Board. Similar to previous work, WWF is intensifying monitoring and enforcement in partnership with Park Authorities, the Bunaken Board, NRM II, Dr. Mark Erdmann (Coelacanth researcher, NRM consultant, and advisor to WWF) dive operators, local NGOs, and communities. In Bali Barat National Park, intensification is focused on the patrolling activities supported by villagers living in the adjacent marine-park, as well as the park authority and the existing dive operators and resorts established within the park area.

Accomplishments during the reporting period:

1. Patrol activity covering almost the entire Bunaken National Park implemented regularly. A group of destructive fishermen were caught during the patrols conducted in January. Punishment for the fishermen was six (6) months in jail.
2. As a result of the five-year Conservation Development Strategic Plan designed through the Friends of the Reef campaign (see previous report), a multi-stakeholders patrolling system to protect the marine area of Bali Barat National Park has been in place since February 2002. This achievement was accomplished through a series of meetings with related stakeholders between November 2001 and February 2002. The purpose of the meetings was to develop patrol guidelines and procedures, establish a task-force, and finally, to provide training. The objective of the patrol is to protect the reef in Bali Barat National Park from (mainly) destructive fishing practices. Patrol activities are carried out twice a week, involving 6 personnel from different sectors in each patrol: 2 police agencies, 2 park authority staffs, and 2 local communities. Evaluation is conducted monthly.
3. A series of meetings with various but related stakeholders to assist the development of a sustainable financing scheme to support management efforts for Bali Barat National park and other areas within the Banda-Flores ecoregion was conducted during January 24-28, 2002. The program was supported by Barry Spergel, a WWF Conservation Finance officer from the United States.
4. In addition to the Bali Barat National Park, the lessons learned on patrol systems (i.e. technical, legal basis, approaches, etc) in Bunaken National Park were introduced by the Bunaken Advisory Board into the Derawan Isles. The isles are biodiversity-rich and slated to become a marine protected area in the near future. This was done in early March 2002, with support from TNC and other National NGO's. In addition to introducing the patrol system, the Bunaken Advisory Board also shared their experience in conservation management, offering valuable inputs for constructing a rational and realistic management plan for the Derawan Isles.

Results of Activity 1.1.2: Encourage environmentally sound science-based management

Often park managers and regional planners issue policy on resource-use patterns and development opportunities without adequate support of scientific-based data. As a result, many management plans based on such policies are not effective in the long term. WWF, therefore, is committed to help park managers and regional planners to improve their abilities in environmentally-sound conservation management, which will achieve lasting results.

Accomplishments during the reporting period:

1. Training on the spawning aggregation sites (SPAGS) of groupers was conducted in Manado during 20th November – 3rd December 2001. A total of 15 participants were involved, including representative of Tanela Foundation, Samratulangi University, Bunaken Management Board, the park authority, and NSWA. All participants were expected to be able to identify the spawning aggregation sites as well as the spawning behavior of the grouper and Napoleon wrases. At the end of the training, a SPAGS monitoring team was established. In the months following the training, the team has been able to conduct monitoring activities within the jurisdiction of Bunaken National Park.
2. A fisheries social-economic and market survey was carried out in Sangihe Talaud of North Sulawesi. The implementing agency was Tim Raja Laut—one of WWF's early partners.
3. GIS and Mapping training were carried out in Bali Barat National Park in November 2001. Following the training, participants were able to use GIS-based mapping and analysis to strengthen their capability in conservation management. These skills are particularly useful for reviewing the zonation scheme of the Bali Barat National Park. The training consisted of 6 modules: computer preparation and installation of both hardware and software; introduction to ArcView; editing, digitizing, and overlaying in ArcView; analyzing, mapping, and registering map in ArcView; spatial and 3-D analysis; and GIS application for Bali Barat National Park.
4. A scientific monitoring strategy on 32 permanent transects was implemented in January 2002 with park staff and other stakeholders. It is expected that more comprehensive coral data will be obtained, particularly for use in anticipating the next potential El-Nino event in March 2002.
5. A series of meetings with various stakeholders, including the Head of the Directorate of Conservation and Marine Park, the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries was held in March 2002 regarding the necessity to implement a proper Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on Mariculture, to be developed by a private company within the jurisdiction of Bali Barat National Park. A similar meeting was also carried out with the District Fisheries Officers.
6. A survey on the characteristics of fishes obtained by blast fishing was carried out in collaboration with Udayana University. The results provide new insight into the effort to increase public awareness regarding the effect of destructive fishing practice; effects such as low quality and susceptibility of fish yields to potential pathogens that may cause human hazards.

Activity 3: Partnerships and flagships

WWF works to facilitate the conservation action of other stakeholders. As a result, strategic and effective partnerships are a hallmark of WWF's conservation philosophy. Over the years, WWF has found that identifying and highlighting flagship species that are of interest due to their charismatic nature or economic importance has helped to increase interest and support for conservation activities and therefore enhance partnerships with key stakeholders. As part of the long term strategy to enhance conservation at key reef areas, WWF is devoting considerable effort to forming strategic partnerships and enhancing support by promoting conservation of specific flagship species and the broader ecosystem that sustains them.

Accomplishments during the reporting period:

1. The co-management program, developed in several key sites including Bunaken and Bali Barat National Park, was communicated to policy makers through a workshop held by TNC and NRM in Jakarta February 20, 2002. It is expected that the program will be adopted nationally by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, as well as the Ministry of Forestry. Follow up is needed to develop a legal basis for such an approach.
2. A Code of Conduct (COC) for divers visiting Bali Barat National Park has been developed, and will be officially legalized and announced in May 2002. Similar to the patrolling system, this result was also accomplished through a series of meetings with stakeholders, in particular the dive operators that operate in the area.

Activity 4: Communication, Magnification and Capacity Building Strategy

WWF is providing a platform to build capacity and communicate about successful tools to improve marine resource management, especially in the arena of multi-stakeholders marine protected area management. WWF is sharing its success stories to various multi-stakeholder marine management units to elicit interest. The hope is that these groups will want to replicate and magnify this approach in other areas. WWF is encouraging this replication particularly in the priority areas of the SSME that were identified by recent Biodiversity Conservation Vision Workshop and in areas of the Banda-Flores sea which have been identified by recent assessments. By targeting key actors ranging from national government and industries with a regional impact, to local park managers, communities and operators, the eventual target is widespread magnification of multi-stakeholder management approaches to other priority marine areas of these ecoregions.

A significant WWF effort is focusing on capacity building within the new Ministry of Maritime Affairs and relevant provincial planning boards. This is to ensure that an effective network of marine protected areas is seen as a priority, and to expose planners and decision-makers to new approaches for managing marine and coastal resources such as ecoregion conservation in grappling with larger scale issues. WWF has recently presented the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas Biodiversity Conservation Vision (developed by over 80 regional marine scientists and managers) to the Indonesian Government. The Government in turn asked WWF to lead the process of developing conservation action strategies for North Sulawesi and East Kalimantan. WWF is pursuing this enthusiastically and has arranged for stakeholder meetings to initiate discussions for the development of these strategies.

Accomplishments during the reporting period:

- Production of several environmental education materials for public awareness, followed by public dissemination through various media, such as radio, local television, school classrooms, and Garuda in-flight magazine.

Objective II: Formulating a tri-national strategy to protect marine turtles and their habitats as a first step to creating a tri-national ecologically representative network of MPAs across the SSME.

3.1 Outreach and Advocacy with the Philippine, Indonesian, and Malaysian Governments to secure their full participation in and commitment to a tri-National marine turtle conservation strategy

WWF-SSME first broached the concept of the tri-national initiative during the TIHPAJMC meeting in Kota Kinabalu (KK). With funding support from WWF-SSME, the Director of Marine Protected Areas of Indonesia was invited to sit as an observer and present the status of sea turtles in Indonesia. The Indonesian Director signified his interest to include Derawan Islands as part of the TIHPA. As the planned activities drew near, WWF-SSME held follow-up meetings with relevant state government agencies in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia and with the Head of District and various district government agencies and NGOs in Berau, Indonesia on February 1-9, 2002. The consultations in KK firmed up the buy-in of two state government agencies in Malaysia, namely: Sabah Parks and Sabah State Fisheries Department. Other offices that were identified to be critical in the success of this initiative were also identified at this meeting. WWF proceeded to Berau to continue with the consultative process. The Head of BAPELDA (Local Environment Office) supported the planned initiative and later on arranged a meeting with the Bupati (Head of District). The team also encouraged him to organize a multi-sectoral meeting in collaboration with WWF Wallacea site based personnel to broaden the support of stakeholders. The multi-sectoral meeting where WWF-SSME presented the proposed tri-national initiative was attended by representatives from the district offices of Berau for Environment, Tourism, Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources, Social and Political Office and local conservation NGOs e.g. Kalbu and Bestari and The Nature Conservancy. The team also formed a local organizing committee, which helped put together all the logistical requirements, and coordination works in Berau.

3.1.1 Training on marine turtle biology, management, and conservation to orient and build capacity key government agencies

The training on sea turtle biology and conservation was conducted in Sangalaki Island in Derawan Islands on March 27 to 31, 2002. It was attended by 26 participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines who came from conservation oriented government agencies, people's organization, youth organization and non-government organizations.

The training program focused on developing the participants' technical skills on sea turtle biology, conservation, research and monitoring techniques and management approaches. The training curriculum covered topics on species identification, nesting activities, census techniques, tagging and morphology, nesting beach management; safe turtle egg handling practices and hatchery management, among others. The program also presented various approaches and strategies on conservation and sustainable management of sea turtles and their habitats such as ecotourism.

3.1.2 Technical workshop to develop a Tri-national Marine Turtle Conservation Strategy with a Focus on the tri-national area between East Kalimantan, Sabah and the Sulu-Archipelago.

The tri-national management program was introduced through a series of outreach and advocacy activities with relevant government agencies in Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines to secure their buy-in and active support and commitment. An expansion of existing management regimes in Philippine-Malaysia TIHPA to include the Derawan Islands in East Kalimantan, Indonesia and formulation of a tri-national conservation program was proposed to relevant stakeholders.

Currently, the TIHPA protects one population of green turtles and one population of hawksbills. However, other important populations and habitats require similar protection and can significantly benefit from a strong collaboration with TIHPA. Another important area that harbors a major (i.e., > 1,000 nesters per year) green turtle nesting population is the Derawan Islands in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Effective protection of these two rookeries will ensure the long-term survival of two major nesting populations of green turtles and one of the largest hawkbill nesting population in the ASEAN region.

The above agenda was discussed during a technical workshop held in Tanjung Redeb, Berau from April 1 –3, 2002. This workshop, which was co-organized by WWF and the local government of Berau, was technical in nature and involved sea turtle experts and relevant agencies from the three countries. A total of 62 participants representing government agencies, local government units, scientists and NGOs attended. Inputs included presentations of the status of sea turtles at the global, regional and country levels as well as a presentation of the WWF-SSME, which provided a context for the workshop and program formulation. At the end of 3 days, the participants formulated the SSME tri-national sea turtle conservation program. The program defined the general objective and 7 specific objectives. The participants recommended sixty-two actions clustered under 7 issues. Among these recommendations was the proposal to expand the Philippine-Malaysia TIHPA to include the Derawan Islands of Indonesia. The workshop also agreed to tap the Directorate Office of WWF-SSME to provide an interim coordinating mechanism to move the program forward.

Table of Progress

| Benchmark Number | Benchmark/Output | Status* |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1.1.1 Monitoring and Enforcement | Total elimination of destructive fishing practices in the park | On track |
| 1.1.2 Environmentally sound, science based park management | Applied conservation sciences in marine park management | Some early delays, but now on track |
| 3 Partnership and Flagships | Established strong partnership for sustainable management of the park | Completed |
| 4 Communication Strategy | The conservation program is adopted by stakeholders | On track |
| 3.1 | Agreement by the Governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines to participate in the development of a Tri-national Strategy for the Conservation of Marine Turtles in the SSME. | On-Track |
| 3.1.1 | Much improved knowledge and skills among important management agencies for the management and conservation of marine turtles | On-Track |
| 3.1.2 | A cooperative Tri-national Strategy for the protection of marine turtles | On-Track |

* Status may include activities that are completed, on-track, delayed, mixed performance, or cancelled.

Next Steps

A series of outreach and advocacy activities will be implemented in the next seven months. These are meetings with JMC members from the Philippines the last week of May; meetings with JMC members from Malaysia and relevant Federal Agencies in Malaysia i.e. Fisheries Department and Attorney General's Chamber in June. After these meetings, WWF will know if it will push through with the political workshop that it is planning to hold in Manila in the last quarter of 2002. This workshop will be composed of high-level government officials who will formally endorse and commit to the full implementation of the tri-national turtle conservation strategy.

Success Stories

Our ultimate aim in this tri-national initiative is to implement a ratified tri-national sea turtle conservation strategy. Through the technical workshop that USAID co-financed with a few other donors, the initiative was able to draft a proposed tri-national conservation program. From what has been achieved, thus far, WWF is once again at the cutting edge of initiating anew a collaboration between three countries on transboundary issues of sea turtles. Despite the initial negative perception from some quarters, WWF's strong campaign to push forward its agenda on

this initiative is now gaining positive ground and advocacy/lobbying activities are being welcomed in the three countries with significant enthusiasm.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenge # 1: After the first consultative meetings in Malaysia and Indonesia, the WWF team had high expectations that the training and workshop would push through smoothly because key government agencies (state government in Malaysia and district government in Indonesia) were quite receptive to the idea of the three countries cooperating and implementing a sea turtle conservation program. These expectations waned as the team received news from Malaysia that two federal government agencies do not want to get involved in the proposed initiative if the agenda is to get into an agreement with Indonesia. A number of political reasons and social events that have or might sour potential relations between the two countries were cited. The claim of Indonesia over the disputed Sipadan Island will be heard in the International Court in Hague in July of this year. Indonesian laborers in a factory in Malaysia recently went on a strike and rampage that led to the burning of security vehicles and the waving of Indonesian flag in the plant compound. The timing of the workshop was perceived to be a bad for any proposed agreement between the two countries to flourish. Even the political relationship between Malaysia and the Philippines was perceived as wavering.

Actions Taken: Despite the bleak scenario that the Malaysians (both partners and colleagues) were trying to paint, they still committed to send their representatives to the training and workshop. But WWF did not stop there. We tried to find links to the federal government agencies perceived to be adamant about not attending the workshop and find out if these perceptions were true. In fact, the federal officers who were invited to the workshop had other commitments that coincided with the workshop.

Challenge # 2: The Bupati, together with the other district government officials were very pleased to know that WWF's approach to the conservation is community oriented. WWF thinks that the Bupati is a critical force in this initiative as he advocates for active community involvement. After the Bupati removed the turtle eggs concession in Sangalaki Island in December 31, 2001, he was in search of an alternative solution for community members particularly of Derawan Island whose incomes were displaced with the ban. The Bupati was getting desperate and wanted to lift the ban and give the lost livelihood back the people of Derawan. He was receptive to the idea of ecotourism and challenged WWF to produce results in six months. Otherwise, he threatens to give back the concession.

Action Taken: The challenge of the Bupati is something that we have to accept even if it is a very tough job to fill given the very short time frame. WWF is working hard to consolidate the actions of the three countries to convene another workshop that will ratify the tri-national conservation program strategy and put it into action. There is definitely not enough time to produce results from ecotourism as the Bupati has challenged, but convening a political workshop and ratifying actions recommended in the technical workshop by the three countries may convince the Bupati to submit to the long process that this initiative normally requires. In addition, the workshop identified 13 actions to address livelihood concerns, which may also serve to gain his cooperation. This must be given high priority if we strive to succeed in Derawan Islands.

Challenge # 3: While Derawan Islands is located along East Kalimantan and falls within the geographic setting of WWF Indonesia's Sundaland Bioregion which lacks expertise in the marine environment, the area is being administered by WWF Indonesia, Wallacea Bioregion whose vast expertise in the marine environment include the sea turtles. Unfortunately, it is quite costly for WWF-Wallacea to step up its operation in Derawan because its management office is located in Bali, which is about six hours away by plane. Currently, it deploys only one staff who works closely with the community, especially with the local NGOs. If WWF is seriously considering to take up the task ahead for the tri-national initiative, it may have to support more site based personnel which must be supervised by at least one senior staff who can deal effectively at the level of the Bupati and other district government agency officials. The remoteness of the Derawan Islands poses a big gap for WWF-Wallacea to finance such set up.

Challenge # 4: After having identified the common issues and agreed on several action points that the participants at the workshop recommended, WWF is now facing the task of facilitating an effective collaboration among the three countries. The WWF Directorate's Office was tasked by training and workshop participants to take forward the outputs of the workshop. The Directorate will then lead in the planning and execution of the next steps in the finalization of the draft sea turtle conservation program and work with governments and other key players to find the means to get the program implemented and coordinate its implementation in the future. The Directorate's Office is faced, however, with lack of funds to implement, coordinate and monitor the tri-national activities in Derawan Islands.

Eastern Himalayas Ecoregion: Terai Arc Landscape

Strategic Goals & Objectives

The goal for the entire Eastern Himalayas ecoregion is to conserve representative facets of biodiversity within habitat areas that are large enough to support the natural ecological and evolutionary processes that maintain the ecoregion. The Terai Arc Landscape program was launched in order to restore and maintain wildlife corridors that link 11 protected areas between Nepal's Parsa Wildlife Reserve and India's Rajaji National Park in order to meet the larger vision of the ecoregion. The objective of the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) is to conserve the biodiversity, soils and watersheds of the Terai and Churia hills in order to ensure the ecological, economic and socio-cultural integrity of the region. Forests connecting these protected areas are in various stages of degradation and fragmentation due to human population and poverty pressures. Restoring wildlife corridors will facilitate the dispersal and genetic exchange of wildlife populations, ensure the long-term survival of key endangered species, and provide ecological and socioeconomic services integral for the well being of local communities.

The proposal submitted to USAID focused on seven components of this objective:

1. Forest Regeneration through Protection
2. Community Forestry
3. Enhanced Livelihoods (Community Development)
4. Anti-poaching Activities
5. Improved Management of Protected Areas
6. Transboundary Agreement
7. Establishing Monitoring Methodology

Collaborators/Partners

- USAID
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- Netherlands Development Agency (SNV)
- Integrated Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD)
- Department of Forests, HMG Nepal
- Department of National Parks and Wildlife, HMG Nepal

National and community level organizations that WWF partners with include:

- King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC)
- Women in Environment
- Environmental Camp for Conservation (ECCA)
- Buffer Zone Councils
- Village Development Committees
- Local User Groups
- Community Based Organizations including women's groups

Partnerships to work on the Terai Landscape are being sought with:

- DFID
- CARE

Summary

Following the initiation period of the TAL program, activities have focused on mobilizing and strengthening Community Forestry Users' Groups (CFUGs), improving National Parks management through poaching control, community services, conservation education and enhancing socio-economic conditions amongst local communities. Integrated conservation and development activities have been carried out in selected village districts of Bardia, Banke, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Nawalparasi, Dang and Palpa.

The gap studies on Protected Area Management and biodiversity of TAL has been completed with GIS baseline data developed for the Basanta corridor and the conservation plan prepared for the Western Terai region, the west of Bardia. Studies on socio-economic conditions, forest and biodiversity, community development, and corridor forest management of the TAL have also been carried out. Forest regeneration activities have been initiated, including the establishment of 13 nurseries that will be able to produce as many as 330,000 seedlings. Moreover, 161 hectares was planted with 38,933 saplings. Another forest regeneration activity included the removal of encroachers from 5,500 ha of forests in the Basanta corridors with the help of local communities.

The Department of Forests approved 8 Community Forestry User Group constitutions while another 19 constitutions are currently being prepared. 33 CFUG members were taken on a study tour to Royal Chitwan National Park and buffer zone as well as successful community forestry sites in Butwal, Palpa and Pokhara with the objective of motivating CFUGs. Community Forestry management training was provided to participants of 13 CFUGs in the Dovan area. In order to enhance livelihoods, TAL focused on capacity building within local communities, and trained more than 200 people in the last six months. The training focused on women's empowerment, fire prevention & control, cattle herders, record keeping, orientation and planning workshops. Other capacity building efforts involved the construction a new day care center at the house of a local leader, (unfortunately it was looted and is temporarily closed) six literacy classes for 150 livestock herders and the formation of 3 eco-clubs. In order to mitigate wildlife conflict, 6.4 kilometers were fenced with barbed wire, 26 kilometers of trenches has been maintained, and another 5.3 kilometers of trenches is being planned for construction. 77 bio-gas plants were installed while 241 improved cooking stoves was installed in order to improve energy efficiency. The health post in Mahadevpuri VDC was renovated as well.

250 hectares of grassland in Royal Bardia National Park (RBNP) and Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve (RSWR) were placed under improved management while 4 waterholes in RBNP and RSWR were constructed for the benefit of wildlife.

Highlights

▪ Rhino Translocation Completed

In March 2002, 10 rhinos were successfully translocated from the Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP) to the Royal Bardia National Park (RBNP) in order to re-establish a second rhino population in its historic range. RCNP has the world's second largest population (over 500) of the Greater one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). Prior to the translocation of rhinos to the Royal Bardia National Park, the Chitwan population was the only rhino

population in Nepal. Due to the vulnerability of a single population to stochastic and other events, an objective to establish a second viable population of 100 was formulated. Since 1986 to 2001, a total of 63 rhinos were translocated from RCNP to the Karnali flood plains of RBNP. With the addition of 10 more rhinos in 2002, the number of rhinos translocated is now 73. The translocated rhino population is reportedly reproducing and adapting well in its new environment.

The rhino relocation was covered by National Public Radio from the US on a two part Radio Expedition program.

▪ **Memorandums of Understanding Signed with Partners**

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) have been signed by WWF Nepal with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Netherlands Development Agency and Integrated Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD) for cooperation on landscape level conservation of the Terai Arc Landscape.

▪ **Large-scale Management Planning Initiated**

The Large Program Management Task Force (previously the Private Sector Advisory Task Force) consisting of external advisors from Goldman Sachs and McKinsey and Company as well as WWF US staff, began working with the Terai Arc Team beginning this year, to provide:

1. Strategies and Activities Review – review of biological, socio-economic, and public policy context to frame how proposed program addresses threats and scales-up to achieve conservation vision.
2. Organizational Plan– including a well-defined management structure, clear authority and accountability, related systems, partnership arrangements, and staff skill development as needed.
3. Operating plan – covering the specific costs and timing necessary to achieve each project objective, including all expenses, income from trust funds and other sources, modeling of inflation, exchange rates, and financial risks.
4. Sustainable Funding Plan --integrated project finance and funding including donor-funded programs and sustainable-financing mechanisms, and addressing legal mechanisms and major donor expectations.
5. Risk Mitigation Plan -- full assessment of political and economic risks and the development of procedural and organizational mitigation strategies.
6. Financial Control Plan – fulfillment of each of the commonly accepted Committee of Sponsoring Organizations (COSO) standards, including thorough mapping of financial flows for WWF and partners, assessment of organizational controls, and development of transparent information systems.
7. Reporting and Review Plan – including review of monitoring and evaluation plan, evaluate information flows and demands, streamline outputs and development of an on-going process to adapt and modify program plans.

The Large Management Planning Workshop was held in Kathmandu, in March 2002, bringing together staff from WWF US, WWF UK and WWF Nepal to determine information

gaps, critical research needs, activity plans, and priority plans to be further discussed between June 10th and 14th, when the TAL team will meet in Washington DC.

▪ **TAL Strategy Workshops**

A workshop was held on January 17, 2002, to develop a communication strategy for TAL with participants representing DNPWC, DOF, TAL team and WWF staff. A communications consultant was hired to develop the communications strategy, which has since been completed. The strategy aims to have the TAL program reach to the stakeholders in the most effective manner. It identifies the target groups and contains the workplan, approaches, tools and medium, key messages for communicating and promoting TAL. This workshop was followed by the Forestry Sector Donor's Meeting held the week after, which focused on watershed management and forest management. The Secretary, Mr. C P Shrestha agreed that the Government would promote watershed management in the mountains and the Churia Hills.

Results by Objective and Activity

Despite the political upheaval in Nepal, fieldwork in the Terai continued for this entire reporting period. As this was the first year of implementation, much time and effort was expended on advocacy and addressing the urgent threat of illegal encroachment regarding long term sustainability of the program itself. However, the declaration and continuation of a State of Emergency in the country since November 2001 curtailed some of the planned activities. Accordingly, not all of the program objectives could be met.

Result (Activity) 1: Description: Forest Regeneration through Protection

In order to meet the objective of obtaining GIS mapping and ground truthing results through accurate GIS maps of forest conditions, studies on forest condition and biodiversity status of TAL were carried out. The GIS baseline of the Basanta corridor was developed and the conservation plan prepared for the Western Terai region to the west of Bardia.

Forest regeneration activities surpassed the planned objectives for this period. 13 nurseries for producing tree seedlings were established which was higher than the originally planned 7 nurseries for the whole year. Moreover, 161 hectares of enrichment plantation was planted with 38,933 saplings of Bamboo, Kapok, Bakaino, Cane, Asna etc. rather than the 150 hectares originally planned. There have been significant achievements during this reporting period when measured against the targets in the annual work plan. Fencing and protecting the area from open grazing will further enhance the planting of vegetation in barren lands in the two critical corridors. The remaining plantation work is expected to take place at the onset of the rainy season in June.

Result (Activity) 2: Description: Community Forestry

To meet the goal of forming and establishing 15 Community Forest User Groups in the Basanta and Katarniaghat corridors, 8 CFUG constitutions were approved by the Department of Forests and an additional 19 constitutions of other CFUGs are being prepared. A study tour for 33 members of CFUGs was carried out where they were taken to areas of successful community forestry management and protected areas to learn about effective management and biodiversity conservation. Community forestry training was provided for 25 participants from 13 CFUGs as

well as people from proposed community forestry areas in order to increase the empowerment and participation of local communities. In order to address women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming, gender awareness training was carried out for 17 participants. Other training sessions included record keeping to 22 participants, orientation workshops (in Bardia, Basanta, Katarnia and Lamahi) for 67, planning workshops for 22 (in Kailali), cattle herder training for 50 (in Lamahi), and a fire prevention and control training to the 20 local people of Dang district.

In both the mentioned forest corridors, WWF is working with CFUGs in order to strengthen and improve sustainable management of the forest. As some of the CFUGs have not yet been registered with the DOF, TAL is supporting them to prepare constitutions and operational plans required for User Committees to become independent. TAL is also working with CFUGs in the critical bottleneck sites of Lamahi, Dovan and Mahadevpuri. All the proposed CFUGs of the two corridors have identified plantation sites, the required number of seedlings and preferred species choice. Similarly the plan for seedling plantation in Lamahi and Dovan bottlenecks have been completed. The plantation will be carried out in the monsoon season that begins in June. 6.4 kilometers of barbed wire fencing was carried out in Basanta, Katarniaghat and Lamahi for site protection of natural regeneration plots.

Result (Activity) 3: Description: Enhanced Livelihoods (Sustainable Development)

Goals for enhancing livelihoods included the initiation of pilot projects that would meet locally defined needs in the Basanta and Katarniaghat corridors. After education needs were identified, TAL developed 6 literacy classes for 150 livestock herders in the Basanta corridor and went on to form 3 Eco clubs. These are significant achievements when measured against the work plan targets of classes for 180 herders and formation of 15 eco-clubs. The remainder of the targets will be met completely by the end of this year.

The health post in Mahadevpuri VDC was renovated and 30 drinking water supply schemes were supported in Mahadevpuri VDC so as to meet basic safe drinking water and access to health needs. In order to address the issue of fuel efficiency and alternative energy, 77 biogas plants were installed in households and 3 persons trained as biogas technicians. Moreover, 24 improved cooking stoves were installed and 20 persons trained. One major impact of providing alternative energy has been the freeing up of women's time so that they are able to attend various training sessions. This has also been promoted by the establishment of a day care center at Ratanpur, Basanta corridor since June 2001, with 42 children in attendance. (Unfortunately, the Center was robbed and has been closed down temporarily. Investigation is ongoing to find out the persons responsible for this act.) In order to overcome gender inequities, income generation activities focusing primarily on women were initiated. These included the distribution of 30 female piglets and 2 grown pigs to members of 3 women's groups in 3 VDCs of Basanta, Hasuliya, Ratanpur, Pawera, for income generation.

An important element of enhancing livelihoods in the corridors and areas surrounding the parks is preventing conflict between wildlife and people when their livelihoods are threatened by wildlife species. Protection of crops from wildlife in villages bordering the corridors was carried out through the construction of barbed wire fencing that covered 6.4 kilometers in Basanta, Katarnia and Lamahi. Another 5.3 kilometers of trenches has been dug in the bottleneck areas of Masuriya, Basanta mainly to keep livestock out and protect natural regeneration plots. Another 26 kilometers of trenches were maintained in RBNP and RSWR, to keep wildlife out of the agricultural fields.

Result (Activity) 4: Description: Anti-poaching Activities

Anti-poaching efforts have continued despite the State of Emergency. 20 anti poaching units are in operation currently, which is one more than originally planned. A total of 4 anti-poaching unit posts have been built, with two in Bardia and two in the Suklaphanta extension area. The network of APUs, established to control poaching in the protected areas inside TAL, includes 3 community based anti-poaching units in the corridors. Most units consist of 4 or 5 staff from the DFO and 2 to 3 locals.

Capacity building and training for anti-poaching activities and radio equipment were provided to the Park and Army personnel by the TAL program in RBNP and RSWR. A total of 5 training programs were carried out, beginning in October 2001, in order to enhance capacity building of anti-poaching operations in RBNP, RSWR, and RCNP. The trainees were a total of 195 park and army personnel, namely, game scouts, rangers and various army personnel. Resource persons included WWF staff, Army Commanders and Park Wardens. Further training will be provided in the next six months to the recently established anti-poaching units in the two corridors.

Result (Activity) 5: Description: Improved Management of Protected Areas

Habitat management in the Terai Landscape has focused on the construction of 4 waterholes in RBNP and RSWR, without which wildlife would not have enough water for the dry season. Additionally, 250 hectares of grassland is under management in RBNP and RSWR where invasive species were removed, unwanted bushes cleared and grasses burned by the park authorities.

An important achievement in wildlife management in parks consisted of the translocation of 10 rhinos from Royal Chitwan National Park to Royal Bardia National Park, so as to firmly establish a second rhino population in Nepal. In March 2002, the 10 rhinos were successfully translocated from RCNP to RBNP. RCNP has the world's second largest population (over 500) of the Greater one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). Prior to the translocation of rhinos to the Royal Bardia National Park, the Chitwan population was the only rhino population in Nepal. Due to the vulnerability of a single population to stochastic and other events, an objective to establish a second viable population of 100 was formulated. Since 1986 to 2001, a total of 63 rhinos were translocated from RCNP to the Karnali flood plains of RBNP. With the addition of 10 more rhinos in 2002, the number of rhinos translocated is now 73. The newly translocated rhino population is reportedly adapting well in its new environment.

The rhino translocation was carried out with the support of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) and WWF Nepal. A task force was created under the coordination of DNPWC, KMTNC and WWF Nepal. They identified the capture sites, the number of animals to be captured and arranged the logistics for translocation which was carried out without any casualties. Therefore, according to the annual plan for this first year, targets have been met under this program component.

Result (Activity) 6: Description: Transboundary Agreement

Most illegal activities involving extraction of forest products such as the poaching and illegal trade of wildlife, illegal timber trade, collection of endangered species of orchids and other plants occur along the Nepal and India border. Transboundary cooperation and collaboration is

necessary in order to achieve the objectives of TAL. Thus, DNPWC with WWF NP organized two different agenda preparation meetings in RBNP and RCNP between September 15 and 25, 2001. All park wardens, DOF and project partners from Terai participated in these meetings. The outcomes included consensus on a transboundary meeting set for the week of June 3rd – 5th of this year in Kathmandu between the Ministries of Environment and Forests in India and Nepal. The draft agenda had been prepared and circulated with TAL and CITES as the two topics of discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to move along the discussion on transboundary cooperation and come to an agreement on the Terai Arc Landscape MOU between Nepal and India. Due to current restrictions, the dates have been postponed to June 26 and 27, 2002.

Result (Activity) 7: Description: Establishing Monitoring Methodology

Under the leadership of Dr. Anup Joshi, Chief Scientists for Terai Arc Landscape, a ground truthing trip was carried out in March of 2002. Field verification of satellite imagery data was verified for forest cover. Training was also initiated at RCNP, Sarlahi and Jhapa in Eastern Nepal in collaboration with DFOs on wildlife monitoring. Data gathering for forest classification and distribution of wildlife population has continued and the cross analysis work is on track. However, due to the political unrest, the data collection needs may not all be met.

Table of Progress

| <u>Benchmark</u> | <u>Output</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|--|--|---|
| 1.1. Obtain GIS Mapping and ground truthing results | 1. Accurate GIS maps of forest conditions with detailed layers on community forests in pilot sites produced by June 2002. 2. Forest classification cross analysis produced by June 2002. 3. Establishment of database unit by September 2002. | 1. On track 2. On track 3. Delayed |
| 1.2. Collect baseline data on wildlife in the Terai | 1. Baseline data on wildlife distribution of mammals, birds, and plants in the Terai produced by June 2002. 2. GIS baseline database unit established at WWF office, later to be housed with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation by June 2002. | 1. On track 2. Delayed |
| 1.3. Establish natural regeneration plots | 1. Mixed tree species seedlings produced for plantations in the Basanta and Katarniaghat corridors for FY02. 2. 250 ha of regenerated forests in the pilot sites during FY02. 3. 100 ha of fallow community and government forests in the two corridors under restoration in FY02. | 1. On track 2. Completed 3. Completed |
| 2.1. Establish and Strengthen Community Forest | 1. 5 Community Forest User Groups formed and institutionalized during FY02 in the two corridors (Basanta and Katarniaghat). 2. Operational plans developed for community | 1. On track 2. On track |

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| User Groups | <p>forests and collaborative forests in the corridors.</p> <p>3. Empowerment and participation increased of CFUGs in the local communities during FY02.</p> <p>4. Empowerment increased to women's participation in CFUGs.</p> | <p>3. On track</p> <p>4. On track</p> |
| 2.2. Build capacity of government implementing agencies | <p>1. 25 government field staff trained successfully in community forestry and gender mainstreaming during FY02.</p> <p>2. Increase in participation of local communities in planning, managing and developing of conservation activities as a result of better-trained forest officials.</p> | <p>1. Delayed</p> <p>2. Mixed performance</p> |
| 3.1. Identify and initiate meeting locally defined needs in the Basanta and Katarniaghat corridors | <p>1. Local needs identified and pilot programs launched in the two corridors, which will possibly include safe drinking water, health care facilities, alternate energies and education opportunities.</p> <p>2. New interventions regarding income generation sources will be identified and initiated following rapid assessments held by consultants to identify locally defined priority needs within the pilot sites.</p> | <p>1. Completed</p> <p>2. On track</p> |
| 3.2. Protection of crops from wildlife in villages bordering the corridors | <p>1. Reduction in incidences of crop damage by wild animals based on 2001 figures.</p> | <p>1. On track</p> |
| 4.1. Establish APUs in wildlife corridors under restoration | <p>1. Two APUs in wildlife restoration corridors set up</p> <p>2. Two posts established (costing \$6,000 each), one in Basanta forest area and one in Katarnia area.</p> <p>3. Poaching incidents in pilot wildlife corridors decreased from figures derived from baseline data.</p> | <p>1. Completed</p> <p>2. Delayed</p> <p>3. On track</p> |
| 4.2. Improve radio communication system and coordinate anti-poaching efforts within protected areas | <p>1. Improved inter-departmental communication system and coordinated anti-poaching effort</p> <p>2. Trained manpower and better communication system in place</p> | <p>1. Delayed</p> <p>2. On track</p> |
| 4.3. Provide training for government officials as well as local communities | <p>1. Government officials and local communities trained in anti-poaching efforts through series of three training sessions during FY02.</p> <p>2. Developed anti-poaching manual by June 2002.</p> | <p>1 On track</p> <p>2. Delayed</p> |
| 4.4. Design landscape level anti-poaching | <p>1. Regional anti-poaching plan developed for Terai Landscape of Nepal by June 2002.</p> | <p>1. Delayed</p> |

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| plan with coordination system in place for Nepal side of the Terai | | |
| 5.1. Provide park staff with training and improve communications | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three staff trained in GIS and computer courses by June 2002 2. Two guard posts in the Bardia extension area, will be built and handed over (This activity will depend upon the gazettelement of the area by HMG). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delayed 2 Canceled (shifted to RSWR) |
| 5.2. Manage wildlife habitat in the Bardia National Park extension area | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park management strengthened through procurement of vehicles, field gear and survey equipment. 2. Develop buffer zone committees surrounding the extension area where settlements are currently found. 3. Grassland habitat study completed by October 2002. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delayed 2. Delayed 3. Delayed |
| 6.1. Facilitate international dialogue and cooperation between Nepal and India | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two consultative meetings held will result in a declaration on collaboration and cooperation regarding Terai Arc management. 2. Signed transboundary agreement between Government of Nepal and Government of India obtained following the declaration. 3. Cooperation on transboundary issues such as illegal trade control gained by 2002. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delayed 2. Delayed 3. Delayed |
| 7.1. Carnivore Survey in TAL | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft handbook on carnivore survey with illustrations of tracts from survey by December 2001. 2. GIS map showing transects surveyed, location of each tiger tracts and scent-post stations by May 31, 2002. 3. A database of carnivore tracts established during survey by June, 2002. 4. Detailed report with protocols to carry out tiger and carnivore surveys by June, 2002. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On track 2. On track 3. On track 4. On track |
| 7.2. Monitoring of Birds in TAL | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A geo-referenced map of bird monitoring transects by July 30, 2002. 2. A list of rare, threatened, and endangered species of birds of TAL by July 30, 2002. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On track 2. On track |
| 7.3. Establish baseline data on socioeconomic conditions in corridor areas | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Socioeconomic baseline data collected. 2. Use of forest resources monitored. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed 2. Delayed |

Next Steps

TAL is actively engaged in achieving integrated conservation and development activities for biodiversity conservation and community development. WWF Nepal Program has drawn on its previous experience with Integrated Conservation and Development Programs (ICDPs), in particular the successfully implemented Bardia Integrated Conservation Project (BICP). It is clear that continuous discussions with local communities are necessary to produce fruitful results. Accordingly, mobilizers need to be trained and provided with proper orientation.

Management and conservation training have been provided to the forest user groups, conservation groups and VDC members. The effect of these training is apparent in the way the groups have mobilized to improve forest conservation and confront the problem of encroachment. Training and study tours will remain a priority with the program for institutional building. As a function of gender mainstreaming, the program will focus on empowering women and supporting capacity building for natural resources management.

Monitoring visits in the project sites continue to reflect the need for extension programs therefore extension will remain a major component. Project activities, particularly those dealing with community services, infrastructure development and income generation must be coordinated with the Village Development Committee, women's groups and youth clubs. Infrastructure development must be conducted through VDCs and local NGOs. And, in order to avoid duplication of activities by Project and government line agencies, coordination between different agencies is a priority.

Along with the Large Management Task Force, the TAL team consisting of WWF Nepal, WWF US, and WWF UK will meet in Washington DC, June 10-14 to work out the details of large scale management, as an outcome of the March workshop in Kathmandu. The workshop agenda includes consensus on strategies involving long term financial sustainability, partnership plans, information management, and risk assessment. Following the March workshop during which information gaps and major needs were determined, the team has worked on partner plans, strategies for large risks that success of TAL is hinged upon and long-term monitoring and evaluation plans. This workshop will be followed by a Donor Consultation Conference in September where WWF and potential partners will explore common interests and opportunities for collaboration and coordination to bring the TAL vision to life.

Success Stories

A major impact of TAL has been awareness raising regarding the need for corridor conservation and watershed protection amongst governmental and non-governmental line agencies and local communities. The intensive consultation process and involvement in all levels of implementation has generated a high degree of awareness for conservation, which is apparent in the line agencies and people's involvement in conservation activities such as plantation and alternative energy. Local people and governmental authorities have worked assiduously to remove encroachers from forest areas and to prevent over-exploitation of forest resources. The removal of encroachers from 55,000 acres was carried out in August 2001.

Restoration work has surpassed expected targets in the bottleneck and corridor areas of TAL due to DOF's involvement as well as local people's enthusiasm and commitment. This is evident in the establishment of 13 nurseries, 6 Lamahi, 4 in Basanta, 1 in Dovan and 2 in Khata, almost double of the initial planned 7 forest nurseries. Another example is the plantation of tree saplings on more than 160 hectares as opposed to the planned 100 hectares. Once again, this was successful due to local people's motivation and participation; 9 of these nurseries were established by CFUGs with WWF support and 4 were established by the DoF range posts.

In this initial phase of TAL program implementation, the program has also been able to form and develop partnerships with donor agencies and international NGOs. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) have been signed by WWF Nepal with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Netherlands Development Agency and Integrated Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD) for cooperation on landscape level conservation of the Terai Arc Landscape.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Following the royal massacre on June 1, 2001, when Crown Prince Dipendra killed King Birendra and nine members of his family, and the Maoist rebellion a few months later, the political situation in Nepal deteriorated considerably. During this very difficult period, WWF Nepal staff continued to work in areas where the Maoists are active, including the Terai Arc, Dolpo, Kanchenjunga, and Sagarmatha regions. Partly due to strong local support, none of the WWF field offices or program staff has been attacked by Maoists. However, the insurgency has made it difficult for staff to move freely about the local communities and has slowed down fieldwork.

This is the first year of TAL program implementation, which would normally require thorough communication, mobilisation and awareness raising of all stakeholders on forest and wildlife conservation in the Terai as well as the importance of conserving ecological services. Unfortunately, this has not been possible following November 2001 when His Majesty's Government of Nepal declared a State of Emergency, thereby barring public meetings and large gatherings of any kind. As a result, some of the ICDP activities planned for this period had to be postponed.

Nevertheless, most project objectives have been met and in some cases, activities have exceeded the targets. Moreover, the program staff by November 2001, had already oriented the District Forests Offices and the Protected Areas authorities, as well as made linkages with the Federation of Community Forestry Users' Groups. Earlier to TAL program implementation, WWF NP had been running ICDPs (BICP and WETTREC projects) in the area with the support of Netherlands Development Agency (DGIS/NEDA), AREAS/WWF International and Save the Tiger Fund (STF). So it has been possible to carry out some of the activities because of prior relationships with the communities in areas such as the buffer zone of RBNP and the corridors of Basanta and Katarniaghat. This experience has taught us the importance and necessity of building and sustaining relationships with local communities and governments to achieve long term conservation.

Again due to the political instability in the country in 2001, there was heavy encroachment in the forests of the Terai by illegal settlers, *sukumvasis*, encouraged by unscrupulous politicians who claimed that the land was available for the taking. Fortunately, the District Forest Offices and the local people worked together with TAL program support and encouragement, to remove the illegal settlers from over 5500 ha of land in the Basanta forests which was in danger of being

lost totally. The forests reclaimed from the illegal settlers are being fenced and protected by local communities with TAL program support. Encroachment has become a substantial problem, particularly given the lack of a government policy addressing this issue. WWF has been working on this issue; trying to find ways to tackle it, mobilising local people and DFOs to take action, protecting the forests; for most of the first half of the year. This has meant that other activities have had to be delayed. However, the experience has reinforced the understanding of all stakeholders for adaptive and integrated management of the landscape.

The extension area of the Royal Bardia National Park was declared by the then Prime Minister G.P. Koirala in November 2000, as a Gift to the Earth. The gazetting of the Extension Area by HMG/N was expected in 2001, however, it hasn't taken place so far. Therefore the activities such as the construction of sub head quarters, roads etc. in the Extension Area could not be carried out.